

LET US GO A FIELD

BY
EMERSON HOUGH







LET US GO AFIELD

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Photograph by E. Hough.
SAFETY FIRST!

LET US GO AFIELD

BY

EMERSON HOUGH

Author of
"The Mississippi Bubble," "54°-40° or Fight,"
"The Story of the Cowboy," "Out of Doors," etc.



ILLUSTRATED

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To
J. B. H.



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I

YOUR SUMMER ENCAMPMENT

I

YOUR SUMMER ENCAMPMENT

IN our schoolboy lyceum days we were accustomed to discuss the momentous question: "Resolved, that the pleasures of anticipation surpass those of realization." The ayes had it, or ought to have had it. It was wasted time to discuss such a certainty as that.

Look back over the realizations of your own life, and set them over against the fond dreams you once had about what you thought your life was going to be. You will be very apt to conclude that anticipation has realization backed off the boards when it comes to solid comfort. The real pleasure of life consists in dreaming of things we want to do. The most interesting reading in the world is that which tells us about ourselves as we would like to be, or about things we would like to do, or about how to get things we want to get. For my own part, I always thought the wholly impractical pages of a sporting goods catalog were, in the light of a true philosophy, the finest reading in the world. In that

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literature lies at least the anticipation of true happiness, and the ayes always have it.

It does not make the slightest difference in the world whether you and Friend Wife and the kids ever really have that summer vacation together. The important thing is that you shall long for it and plan for it. Should you, by any chance, realize a part of your plans, you will not in the least have discounted the keener delight of having made the plans themselves. Any sportsman knows this. I should not like to say how many foreign lands I have seen, what splendid trophies have fallen to my prowess—in my dreams! Thus, in a wholly simple and inexpensive fashion, I have visited the wildest regions of Africa, Asia, and Australia, besides the more prosaic regions of my own land actually seen. I have slain lions, tigers, and elephants, I know not what else in my dreams, just as you have in yours.

As you plan for your summer encampment, you may visualize a hotel, a cottage, a tent, a shack, a log camp. Any one of these will do handsomely, but no doubt you will most enjoy some sort of transient habitation all your own which you have devised, which you have built, and where you may have guests of your own, rather than live as a guest in surroundings earlier shared by many others. In

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general, then, plan to make your own house, your own camp. You can be entirely comfortable, you and all the family, in that way. Indeed, that is the only real way to go on a wilderness vacation; have it for your own and on your own.

The tent, as used for a family encampment, may very well be large and commodious. You can buy tents into which you can put floors and side walls and screen doors, if you like—tents so large that you can rig up a gasoline stove inside and cook all sorts of things in defiance of all sorts of weather. In tents such as these you can have real cots or even real beds.

For a long and permanent encampment it is well enough to have a good bedtick filled with something soft—anything soft which the country affords. Some persons like to sleep on a cot, although I never saw one which really was comfortable. If a cot is feasible at all, it is in the summertime. The real camp bed is something you can roll up in a bundle and tie with a rope.

The air mattress is a good summer bed if you like air mattresses. Some do not fancy them at any season, but others insist that they solve the whole bed problem. The air bed is good in summer, if ever. I have seen a boy make a very good bed mattress out of two or three canoe cushions of the

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inflatable type. It was a trifle narrow, but the boy himself was narrow.

Blankets? Yes, and plenty, because even in the summertime it often gets cold in the woods, especially in damp weather. It is pretty hard to get a real man's size camp bed down to less than ten or twelve pounds in weight. You can make a good light bed out of a down quilt or two, faced with a light lamb's-wool blanket, the whole covered with a silkaline waterproof cover, fastened along the edges with snap buttons. You are no good as an outdoor man until you have invented a camp bed all your own. Perhaps you are a sleeping-bag devotee. Ephraim is wedded to his idols, and this deponent is already sufficiently disliked for his detestation of all sleeping-bags.

But just the other day this deponent made a discovery in blankets. It happened in a big paper mill in the pine woods country. The blankets were not made of paper, but of wool, and the very best of wool. In the manufacture of paper, the thin film of pulp is carried up out of the vats on a continuous traveling band, several feet in width and perhaps one or two hundred feet in length. This band is made of wool, all wool, and the very best of wool. If there is a fiber of cotton in it the paper pulp will stick and break the fabric which is in process of

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making. Here you can see a blanket seven or eight feet wide and one hundred and fifty feet long—the very kind of blanket which perhaps you have dreamed about in some cold winter camp. This is the very best wool weave that money will buy.

In the course of time these great fabrics become stained and dirty from the pulp. Once it was the custom to discard them altogether and send them to the scrap heap. Now these great strips, in most of the big paper mills, are regarded as salvage, if not as by-products. When they begin to get old and stiff they are taken out and sent to the fulling-mills. Here they are washed clean and fulled out light and fluffy once more. After these treatments they make as good blankets as you can buy. They are cut into lengths and bound and offered for sale at fifty cents a pound—less than half what you usually pay for rough blankets, and less than a quarter of what you would pay for fine lamb's-wool blankets, sometimes taken from lambs which had apparently been running in cotton fields where some of the cotton jarred off.

Having in mind one more camp bed for private consumption, I accumulated from the paper mill above mentioned two heavy blankets, almost like rugs in thickness, and five pairs of soft, fleecy lamb's-wool blankets, soft as down. Alas! A friend

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secured a part of these, and on my arrival home Madame fell upon all the others, saying their like could not be bought in town, and so sequestered them for her own private use. Ah, well! I will go back to that mill one day and get me a good camp bed yet. Should you yourself ever be in the vicinity of a big pulp mill, inquire of the manager what he is doing with his waste blanket stuff. It may prove a bargain in more senses than one. I have never seen the like of the blankets which I got in this way, brief as my ownership thereof proved to be. Of course, not all might prove so good.

How about the cooking which is to go on in your summer camp? How are you going to make bread? There are two good ways, the Dutch oven and the reflecting oven. You will find the latter in aluminum very practical for making biscuits in front of the fire. For real bread, precisely such as grandmother used to make in the fireplace, you may turn to the good old-fashioned Dutch oven in cast iron. It is so heavy that the outfitters offer you substitutes in sheet steel or aluminum. Take your pick. If you are a beginner, you will probably do better with the folding reflector. In this you can see the biscuits begin to burn. In the other sort, you do not know they have burned until you take off the lid.

If you go to a hotel where there is really good

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bread and butter, usually that hotel will prove to be good in all other respects. The same may be said of any camp. There is something solid and respectable about good bread in a camp—that is to say, solid from a philosophical point of view. Learn how to make bread before you go into camp. The bannock is but a makeshift. Take some corn meal along also, and some whole-wheat flour. You will find these wholesome in camp as well as at home. Do not forget the dried apricots and prunes, because you will need some sort of fruit in camp.

In the summertime you cannot legally shoot any game, but there are few camping places where you cannot catch some kind of fish good to eat. Some like fish fried in bacon fat, and others say that olive oil is the only thing. There are cans of other compounds put up for frying purposes. Do not forget the double broiler which folds together with a clip on the two handles. Fish are very good broiled if you cook them over a small hot fire of coals and cook them thoroughly without burning. A little charring on the edge will not hurt them any.

As has so often been said, some of your comfort will depend on your clothing. We generally wear our old clothes in camp, and especially is this the practice with women. A great deal is to be said, however, in favor of clothing made purposely for

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camp wear. You might blow yourself for a khaki skirt for Friend Wife. You, yourself, have known how desirable it is to have loose, easy, yet well-fitted garments in camp. Each of the family should have a sweater and some sort of raincoat. There is nearly always a certain chill around camp at night. It is not a bad plan for any woman to have a pair of rubbers or overshoes somewhere in the kit bag. You cannot be comfortable if your feet are cold, and they will be cold if they are damp after you quit work. A hot-water bottle is an excellent thing to have in camp. If the weather is very damp and the tent cold, sometimes a big hot rock will take off the chill. In one way or another you surely can keep your tent warm if only you will use your wits.

The grocery department ought not to be conducted too much on a catch-as-catch-can basis. Most camp diseases come from badly cooked or badly protected food. Have your flour, bacon, tea, coffee, and sugar just as good in camp as you do at home. Do not eat underdone fish or vegetables. Do not burden yourself with useless things, but let the table be good and varied if your stay in camp is to be long. Be sure that you have good water, pure water. A camp near a spring is desirable if the spring is pure. If you are near cold water you can keep the butter tins or jars in good condition just as Grand-

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mother used to keep her milk crocks in the old spring-house on the farm.

As to medicines, you do not need to be so careful. A box of pills and a box of *Sun* cholera mixture will about fill that bill. Lime-water and linseed oil will cure sunburn if you are particular. Permanganate of potassium, injected, will cure snake-bite. I never carried a hypodermic in camp in my life and have never known a case of snake-bite, but if you are very nervous carry along the outfit. Your sporting goods dealer will supply it.

The finest thing in all camping-out plans is your own personal possible bag. It is to hold your own toilet articles in one of its pockets. You will want to shave and bathe in camp as regularly as at home. In other pockets of your possible bag there may be a spare fishhook or so, some bachelors' buttons that clamp on, a piece of whetstone, a little rolled-up "housewife" with needles and thread, and a pair of blunt-pointed scissors.

Every outdoor man has some obsession of his own. My own is that there should always be needles and thread in camp. This dates back to an early experience. Once, when rather young, I was out on a Western ranch, and while using a drawing knife managed to cut open my kneecap clear across and to the bone. There was no doctor anywhere near, so

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that night I borrowed a large needle and some stout patent thread and sewed up the cut with a beautiful buttonhole stitch, making, I should say, some fifty-odd stitches in all. A surgeon would have been much more economical of his thread, but I knew nothing of surgery at the time. This buttonhole stitch held very well for about a week or ten days, when one day, out hunting on a rather stiff leg, I fell down and broke open the entire seam. That night I once more borrowed the needle and the black patent thread, and, beginning a little further back from the edges, I put in a yet more elaborate button-hole crossing, which has held to this day. Since my first look at the open cartilage of my kneecap I have never felt like going into camp without plenty of needles and patent thread, although as a matter of fact I have never seen a use for either since that time. I presume that the man who carries the hypodermic outfit for permanganate of potassium feels the same way about snake bites.

If you can get all or part of an old bucktail, showing the light and dark hairs, put it into your possible bag. When all other baits lack perhaps you can make one out of this—a dab of wax and a little thread from your spool will help you. Sometimes a little spool of copper wire is useful. Your piece of whetstone is best of carborundum, which

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cuts steel most quickly. Then you will have your waterproof match-box in the possible bag. In the pocket of your coat, fastened by the same thong which carries your dog whistle, you might as well have a good compass. Perhaps you can get hold of a dozen or so of the big torch matches, such as travelers in the Far North use—a giant match which will burn in the rain or even in the water. This is very good for starting a fire when your fingers are numb.

A couple of shirts are sufficient for quite a season in camp. Perhaps Friend Wife will insist on white collars at least once a week, and will not be content with flannelette shirt waists all the time. You can do washing in the camp just as you can at home.

Be prodigal in stockings and have them of heavy wool. If your trousers or overalls are too long, cut the bottoms off and stick the legs in your stockings. Knee breeches are really more comfortable but some do not like to use them. This clothing will go into your own packbag, into which also you will put your possible bag of smaller belongings. Have plenty of pockets in the carryall bag and have a wall pocket to pin up in the tent. You can hang a clothes-line along the ridge pole of the tent. Coat-hangers you can make in camp if you like—indeed you can make a lot of things in camp.

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If you have weak eyes take along a pair of colored glasses in your coat pocket. The large lenses of amber glass are best. In another pocket you can carry a little tube of mosquito dope if you think you need it. A paste made of castor oil and oil of lavender, done up in a squeeze-tube, is about as good as any contrivance, especially for a woman. Ammonia or borolyptol will take out the sting, but liquids are awkward to carry along in glass.

Cutlery? Your own hunting-knife, of course, and let us hope the blade is short. Let the knife scabbard hang loose on your belt, especially if you ride. Have on your saddle or your belt, if you go alone into the woods, a hand ax of real steel with a real handle. You may need it.

Camp furniture? The question is one of transportation. If you are long in camp and have your family with you, it is nice to have a regular table fashioned on the spot. There are usually stumps or logs or boxes which will do for seats. If you have one of the five-gallon oil cases in camp, a square tin, you can do almost anything with it or make almost anything out of it, from a wash-tub or a stove to a store-house. A water pail you can buy made of canvas or rubber, folded. The Indians make one out of the stomach of a deer.

When you come to pack your camp belongings, do

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not let any unit of your outfit run much over fifty pounds. Have handles on each piece. Make it so that it can be checked, packed, or carried.

The amount of duffle you are to take depends much on the kind of camp you are to have. Perhaps there are unmarried young ladies in your family. If so, Mamma will need to have an eye to a camp pitched somewhere near a resort or other locality infested by youth of the opposite sex. This means a certain amount of flannel shirts, blazers, soft hats, etc., not to mention shoes, gloves and other belongings. Yet even these things can be accommodated in camp. In short, your camp can very nearly resemble your home if you so determine. Of course the girls will need some sort of mackintoshes to keep their store clothes dry. The best sort is the light circular cape of pure rubber with gathering bands at neck and wrists. Either a man or woman may wear this sort of waterproof.

Your camera is something which today belongs in your summer encampment almost as much as your tent or fishing rod. Perhaps you have an expensive one and are fond of telling friends that the lens alone cost over seventy-five dollars. In that case you will have to learn how to shoot your camera as you had to learn how to shoot a choke-bored gun. The fine lenses require care in focusing. On a

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late trip into a remote wilderness country where we had fine photographic equipment, it was a plain, commercial, fool-proof camera which cost less than twenty-five dollars, lens and all, that brought home most of the bacon. Perhaps you may have had something of the same experience in some of your trips. A very portable camp style is of the long, narrow, folding type. Any one of many folding cameras will prove quite good enough to give you a record of your vacation. Beautiful enlargements are now made from small negatives and the use of colored lantern slides made from one's negatives has now become quite general among sportsmen.

Of late years the movies have gone into the wilderness for scenes and now you may see for five or ten cents the secrets of the arctic or tropic wilderness. Most of this is professional or semi-professional work, but the time is not far distant when amateur moving-picture outfits will be offered at reasonable rates. I have never heard of such a thing, but offer the idea to manufacturers free of charge. There will be a market—and think of the film such outfits will use!

Suppose we depart from the side of anticipation and look at the realization credits of the camping-out proposition. Why should you go camping out at all except for pleasure? There are excellent addi-



Photograph by Edward J. Care.
CANOEING IN THE FALL

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tional reasons. It is the best business in the world for you to camp out—and still better business for you to see that your neighbor camps out. This statement is entirely susceptible of proof.

The cure for tuberculosis is outdoor air and pure food. Rational and well-conducted camp life is the only thing which can help a man thus afflicted. The great civilized troubles are those of the lungs and of the stomach. These are best set right out of doors.

One state of the Union spent, year before last, \$64,000,000.00 on people who did not camp out enough. Each death in that state cost for postponement—as much as for prevention—\$3,828.00. That was the cost of fighting tuberculosis in each lost fight. It did not cover the industrial loss to the community inflicted by the death of the patient. And all that could have been done to save any one of these patients would have been to send him into the open air and into a good camp.

In one year the United States spent 3,200,000 hospital days on people who did not camp out enough. The Civil War killed 205,700 men in four years. In four years tuberculosis kills 800,000. No army, except the unthinking army of civilized men and women, could face such a percentage of loss as that. And the cure of it, the only possible cure, is more life out of doors.

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Preventable death, preventable diseases, preventable ignorance of how to live and work—these are the real wastes, the unspeakably enormous wastes of our civilized life. Now that waste, that cost of life and effort, that inefficiency of the unit, are things which raise the cost and labor of life for every one of the rest of us. Someone has to pay for the people who do not camp out.

Wipe out the cost of tuberculosis alone and you could pay all the national debts of the world. Wipe it out for a year and you could pay the cost of the Spanish War and throw in two or three Mexican wars. Wipe it out for one year and you could capitalize every national bank in the United States and have enough left over to build the Panama Canal. These are dispassionate figures given by a Boston scientist.

Certainly the inefficiency charge against civilization is an enormous thing. Much of that inefficiency is preventable. Much of it is preventable in only one way, and that way is by a life in the open air, with good food and a well-rested body and mind. We would not dare use a horse as cruelly as we use ourselves. We would say it was not business.

As to the realization side of the debate, therefore, quite a showing can be made as against the pleasures of anticipation. Perhaps you do not feel as though

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you and the family could afford to go camping out this summer—that it would cost too much to take the children out where they can roll in the dirt and paddle in the water. Very well, perhaps you cannot afford it. The one certain thing is that we others cannot afford to have you stay at home.

Viewed as a citizen, viewed as a unit in society, Jones and his family ought to go camping out. When they do not, you and I have to foot the bills, and it is a bill more exorbitant, perhaps, than we have ever realized. The case for the camp seems very plain—at least, as far as Jones is concerned.

II

BAIT CASTING FOR BASS



II

BAIT CASTING FOR BASS

THERE are more bait casters for bass today, ten to one, than there were twenty years ago, and they catch more bass. They do this because the bass is a very wary fish—not because he is not. If he sees you, he is gone, but he cannot see you if you are thirty, forty, or fifty yards away and if you place before him something which looks like a challenge to fight or an invitation to eat. That is the purpose of the modern art of bait casting.

This branch of sport, like many others, follows the modern tendency in its development—that is to say, it is efficient, practical, and destructive. The purpose of sport today apparently is to get the last bird from the cover, the last fish from the water, with the greatest possible certainty and celerity. Perhaps it may not be held good form to mention this tendency. Perhaps it may be wiser to take things as they are and not seek to alter them.

Certainly bait casting has been altered more, whether commendably or not, in the last generation,

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than any other form of outdoor sport. Golf comes down to us practically unchanged. Canoeing, rifle shooting, snowshoeing—these things have not much changed. Fly-fishing retains something of its old ingredients. But bait casting today is only in name what it once was.

The bait caster of today has perhaps a hundred different varieties of lures from which he may choose. Customarily his casting baits are armed with a series of gangs or treble hooks which fishermen buy avidly but which not the wildest imagination can call sportsmanlike.

It always has been a secret known to all who know the habits of the black bass, that bait casting for the bass is most efficient in rather shallow water. Bass are in shallow water usually in the early part of the season. They feed there in the evenings and lie there during the spawning season. Plug-casting for black bass is most efficient during the spawning season or just before it. Later in the summer the bass go down in the deeper water and bait casting then is not equally productive. I have seen bass on the spawning beds in the lakes of northern Wisconsin as late as the middle of August, although in lower latitudes the spawning season would be over perhaps by the middle of June. When it comes to the matter of ethics, therefore, we need not rely

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absolutely on the dates of the game laws so much as on the individual sense of sportsmanship. A wooden plug with eighteen hooks on it, cast over the bed of a spawning bass, will very quickly put an end to the lives of four or five thousand bass.

None the less, bait casting for bass, properly practiced, is as ethical as any form of angling, and it is perhaps not only the most scientific form of angling but one of the most scientific forms of sport—and one of the most difficult as well. In beauty and in art it does not compare with fly-fishing, but it is far more difficult to learn than fly-fishing. The fly rod is a beautiful tool; the bait rod is a brutal agent of efficiency—but before it becomes brutally efficient one needs a certain schooling in its use.

So many have mastered the art of bait casting, made easy of late years, and so efficient has it become in spite of its difficulty, that of late protests begin to be heard against the treble-ganged hook just as we hear protests against the automatic or repeating shotgun; and there is talk that the one and the other eventually will have legislation passed against them. Sometime there will be modification in the use of these highly developed appliances of destruction—but probably not until we have exhausted our fish supply yet more. We do not believe either in preparedness for war or prepared-

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ness for sport in this country—we never take measures to better ourselves until very late in the game. We figure all things on a commercial basis; and one day we will pay a terrible, a disastrous price for that.

Fish culture offers the greatest encouragement in the world to the bait caster. It is difficult to increase our game birds and game animals, but it is perfectly simple to increase our game fishes. The commercial fisheries of the Great Lakes would have been exhausted long before this had it not been that the state hatcheries continually renew the stock of food fishes. The black bass—the usual object of the bait caster—is one of the fishes which can be bred artificially in large numbers.

It is almost fair to say that bait casting in twenty years has degenerated from a sport to a business. You could almost measure that much difference between the gear used then and now. When the middle-aged sportsman of today began to fish for bass he used a rod which then was new-fashioned, a recently invented bait-casting rod a trifle over eight feet in length. Today there are bait casters who use a rod not more than four feet in length; and five feet, five and a half, six, six and a half feet are about the limits in length for the typical short, stiff, highly efficient—and highly nonsportsmanlike—in-

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strument which is called a rod by the bait caster of today. The rod has changed, and the reel, and also the forms of the lures employed.

Just when bait casting began we cannot be sure, but the weight of authority ascribes the origin of the art to the South, more especially Kentucky, where good bass streams were known by our forefathers. These gentlemen, no doubt, used rods cut from Southern cane brakes. No doubt they were long; no doubt, also, they were not long enough to get the bait out far enough to reach a shrewd and wary fish.

It was an old watchmaker of Kentucky by the name of Snyder, who, in the early part of the last century, invented the smooth-running, narrow, long-barreled reel which would enable him to place a bait at a considerable distance from him and still retain communication with the aforesaid bait. Twenty years ago I saw one of these old Kentucky reels which was then said to be more than fifty years old. I have seen many old Kentucky reels which were twenty, thirty, and forty years of age.

There were several watchmakers of Kentucky who by and by went into the business of making fine casting reels—in Lexington, Frankfort and other cities of the old state. We have never had handsomer specimens of the reel-maker's art than

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these early reels. They could not be made as they were, by hand, delicately and beautifully adjusted, at a low price. We always had to pay twenty-five to thirty dollars for such a reel, and one equally good today will cost thirty-five to forty dollars.

The type of the early casting-reel was rather uniform. The barrel was long and narrow. The handle might be single crank or sometimes double, or balance-handled. Such a reel would run for thirty seconds or more when the handle was given a strong twirl. The spindle was always of steel and the box of brass, for the old reel-makers knew that steel would cut steel and brass would cut brass, but that steel against brass would wear indefinitely. Sometimes they put jewels at the ends of the spindles, but these did not really add much, if anything, to the ease of running of the reel. They depended on the exquisite fitting of the plates, the exquisite high temper of the spindle, and the perfect workmanship which went into the reel.

It was some such reel as this and a rod eight feet or more in length which made the equipment of the bait caster of twenty years or so ago—at which time, in the belief of some of us, the art was at a higher and more beautiful stage than it is today. None the less it was an expensive art, for few people could pay those prices for reels. Therefore the

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machine work of American shops began to turn out reels at fifteen dollars, ten dollars, eight dollars, five dollars. They were not so good as the old hand-made reels, but they were perfectly practical. Today there are a score of makes of casting-reels on the market, any one of which will deliver the goods—which is the purpose of sport, as one opines, today.

Twenty-five years ago bait casting was not generally practiced and was, indeed, little known in the eastern states. Really it was the city of Chicago which first gave a big boom to bait casting for bass. In the early developments of this school the old-time gentleman's bass casting rod began to shorten. It got down to about seven feet in length, and the reel usually attached to it had shrunk in price. The light, thin, raw silk line had been developed until it was a practical proposition. With this equipment, neat, compact, difficult to master but extremely efficient when mastered, Chicago bass anglers began to go south, west, east, and north—and to bring back bass when they came home. It soon was discovered that a way had been found to beat the game of this wiliest of game fishes.

The average western bass casting rod—which sometimes was lancewood and sometimes split bamboo—hung around seven feet from 1888 up until about 1896. Then a man over in Kalamazoo, Michi-

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gan, concluded to alter the type of the rod, which heretofore had been a three-piece rod. He took an ordinary piece of Calcutta cane with no joint in it at all, and fastened it in a grip just large enough to hold a reel-seat—he made the latter out of a bicycle handle. His rod, practically a single-piece stick, was a trifle over six feet in length. It was simply a stick for propelling something—just as a boy throws a crabapple from a short bough. The newest idea about it was that of the guides. The rod had but two guides, two and a fourth inches and one and seven-eighths inches respectively, with a tip guide which measured one-half inch in diameter. It was found that by the use of these large guides the line ran very freely. There was not a great deal of style about this Kalamazoo rod, but it “got there” just the same.

This rod was made in the fall of 1896, and during that winter the maker got out another model consisting of a single joint of lancewood four feet in length, with a twelve-inch handle. This may be called the father of the average bait-casting rod of today, which quite commonly consists of a single joint and a butt piece. The guides on this later rod were one and a half inches and one and a fourth inches respectively, in diameter, and the top guide three-fourths of an inch. The principle of large

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guides is therefore relatively modern. It was only a step to the use of large diameter agate guides, polished and rounded, which are the last word in casting gear. This short rod has been made in different materials since then—steel, lancewood, bethabera, and split bamboo.

For one of these short casting rods, say six and one-half feet and six and one-quarter ounces, you will have to pay thirty-three dollars if you get your rod made by a top-notch maker. In steel you can go down to four, five, or six dollars. In split bamboo—good enough to kill bass—you can get a bass casting rod as low as one dollar. Certainly there is range sufficient in price. Without attempting to counsel any man what he should spend for his sporting equipment, it is perhaps fair to say that the more he can pay for his bait-casting outfit, the better time he will have and the longer the outfit will last him. At its top development a good bass casting outfit which can be carried between two fingers and in one pocket will run something over a hundred-dollar bill. At one-tenth of that cost the plain citizen can go out and catch bass.

The hook, finger-grasp, or trigger which one sometimes sees adjusted to the butt of one of these short casting rods was the invention of a friend who saw the original Kalamazoo rod in work. This

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finger-hold or trigger is made by different concerns, and one patented form is detachable from the rod. Take one of these short, stiff, casting machines, with little action except just at the tip, with its finger trigger and its big steel or agate guides, and at first sight one would not think it was a descendant of the old-time bass casting rod of eight feet or better—which was pliable, flexible, with action from the butt joint to the tip. The purpose of the old-time longer bass rod was to handle a bait delicately and to play a fish with some enjoyment. The purpose of the short modern casting rod is to slam a bait as far as possible and to jerk a bass out of the lily pads as quickly as possible. There is no law and no obligation upon any one to join either of these two schools of bait casting, save as his own fancy and conviction shall dictate.

One secret of the fascination of bait casting always has been its difficulty as matched against its desirability. One knows there is a bass out there thirty or forty yards, and one keeps on trying to get at him until finally the knack is learned. Meantime the beginner has become acquainted with the peculiarity of the casting reel which is known as back-lashing—the overrunning of the line when the reel is not thumbed properly while the bait is pulling the line off the reel. In this way the line piles up

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in a series of knots and snarls which may run clear to the spindle and which may keep one, half an hour or so in getting the line free. Of course, if one has to stop and pick out a tangle in the line before he begins to reel in his bait, much of the luring quality of his cast is gone—the bass has had time enough to learn all about the lure which is offered him. The bait caster, therefore, must gently thumb his reel so that the spool will be smooth when his bait lands. Then he can give it the little twitch in imitation of life, and begin steadily to reel it in, to the excitement of the fish which sees it.

All bait-casting reels are made of quadruple gear so that the line may be recovered very rapidly. As this means gain-gearing in the wheels, it must be seen that the workmanship needs to be very fine. It is so fine that ordinarily the reel is much better than the user of it. One does not learn to cast with a good reel and to keep it free of snarls all the time in his first season—nay, nor in his second.

Seeing that this back-lash drawback was an injury to trade, many of our tackle-makers set about freeing the angler of the nuisance. There have been many inventions for application to casting reels—anti-back-lash appliances, level-spooling reels, self-winders, etc., the intention of each of which is to keep just strain enough on the line so that it will

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not overrun but will still pay out freely enough to deliver the bait at a distance from the reel. Of course, every one of these appliances takes off a little from the ultimate capacity of the reel as to distance and delicacy. All the records have been made without any such appliances attached to the reel.

None the less the improved casting-reel seems to be here to stay, as well as the improved casting rod. You can even find good reels made with a free spindle—that is to say, one which does not revolve its gear but only its spindle when you cast out the line, but which engages the gears when you begin to wind in. Whether or not all these things are according to Hoyle, or even in accord with the ultimate ethics of the art, we need not inquire. No doubt if appliances could be made to alter the ancient tools of the game of golf, men would not be wanting who would use them. This is the practical day and age of the world.

When it comes to catching fish, thirty, forty, or fifty feet will kill bass, but thirty, forty, or fifty yards will kill more bass if one can cast a straight line and be in control of his bait all the time. Perhaps the early users of the Kentucky reel found a hundred feet far enough to do the work. In the later days of competitive angling, club tournaments, casting for medals, and the like, the art of bait

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casting has been developed to a wonderful degree. In the fall of 1914, in an angling tournament, the regulation half-ounce weight was cast two hundred and twenty-two feet one inch, this being an average of five different casts. Such work as this would have been deemed impossible ten years ago. It will no doubt be some time before you can do that, perhaps some time before that angler can do it again. That is almost seventy-five yards—rather farther than you can kill a duck with a shotgun.

In accuracy also the records are wonderful. In tournament casting with the quarter-ounce weight, two casts each at the distance of sixty, sixty-five, seventy, seventy-five, and eighty feet, another angler had an average of ninety-nine and six-tenths per cent—almost perfect casting. The standard event in these casting tournaments is the accuracy event with the half-ounce weight—a half-ounce more nearly approximating the weight of the average fishing bait than the delicate quarter-ounce weight. In this event one angler scored ninety-nine and six-tenths per cent—also practically perfect casting. One may tie this record but cannot beat it very far.

In the earlier tournaments a fifty-yard cast with the half-ounce bait was thought wonderful. When it went up to one hundred and ninety-four feet eight inches, in 1906, everyone thought the limit had

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been attained. But last fall a gentleman cast the light quarter-ounce weight one hundred seventy-seven feet five inches—a far more difficult performance than the former. This sort of work indicates that the lightest minnow or spoon can be used with certainty. It is far more difficult to handle these delicate weights than it is to slam away with the big wooden plug or with the average-sized fishing frog.

In the old style of bait casting with the eight-foot rod the angler stood with the tip of the rod dropped a little and held a trifle back. He cast with an upward and forward sweep of the rod, turning his wrist over so that at the close of the cast the handle of the reel was upright, the barrel of the reel having been thumbed meantime so that the line would not overrun. This is a very pretty and graceful style of casting and to a certain extent it can be practiced in boat fishing as well. It is a fine style for light minnow or frog bait with the flexible rod and a perfect reel.

The tournament records, however, are not made in this way. They are all done by the overhead cast, which is more accurate and which has served in getting the greatest distance. In overhead casting the short rod is quite essential. If you will notice an expert at this work you will see that he puts

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the impact of his first casting movement against the side of his forefinger—sometimes there will be finger holds cut in the butt of the rod. Then as the rod comes forward, the hand turns so that the plates of the reel, lying horizontally, run most easily.

As it takes some time for a bait to run out fifty, sixty, or seventy yards of line, it is to be seen that the movement of the casting rod is at first sharp and accelerating, then slow, then slower and slower until the end of the cast. Naturally the line will pull out through the guides most easily when the axis of the line and the axis of the guides coincide. To learn how to do this cast and all the time gently thumb that steadily lessening barrel of the reel is something not mastered in a day. It is really a very pretty art. There are a great many tournament casters who learned on a park lagoon or even on a park lawn; very likely many of these would get greater distance and accuracy than many an old-time bass angler.

It is easily to be seen that the bass caster's outfit may be expensive and is always interesting. It deserves good care and, in fact, must have good care if it is to be efficient. The rod, no matter whether it is a thirty-five-dollar split bamboo of eight feet or a three-dollar rod of four and one-half feet, should be well cared for—wiped dry after fishing,

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straightened out after use, and hung up by the tip during the winter months. This latter is a trick which adds years to any rod's life and tons to its energy.

The bait caster's line is rather a delicate affair. It is never of enameled silk, of course, and equally of course it is never of linen. It will not do for a trolling line because it will kink. It is made of raw silk, hard-braided. In tournament work it is so small that its breaking strain may be as low as five pounds. What is called heavy bass size runs as high as seventeen pounds breaking strain. The average line for good bass fishing will be around ten or twelve pounds breaking strain. That leaves it rather thin, and as it is not waterproof it will rot very quickly unless one is careful to dry it whenever possible.

The line should never be left on the reel over night. It once took a pretty good casting line to stand even two or three days' fishing, although these lines are made much better now than they were twenty years ago. The greatest wear on a line—and the continuous passing through the guides exacts a certain amount of wear no matter how perfect everything is—will be on that portion close to the hook. Here is where the strain of casting is most felt. Therefore, when reeling in your fish, remem-

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ber that as your line grows shorter it grows much weaker. Do not crowd your bass if you have any doubt about your line. Give him time and reach for him as far as you can with your net. It is the last five or six feet of your line which is most apt to break.

The bait caster's reel is another thing which must receive good care. Today there are many reels made which can be taken apart readily and yet others which can readily be oiled. Every man to his liking in these matters. There are owners of revolvers and rifles who boast to their friends how easily they can take these arms apart; yet there are others of an older school who ask "Why should a rifle or a revolver ever be taken apart?" Certainly the old-time high-class Kentucky reel was not meant to be taken apart very often. If perhaps you have jammed such a reel by overheating it through casting too heavy a frog for too long a time, you may have taken it apart and then found you could not put it together again so that it ran as handsomely as it did when you first bought it—and this even though you oiled it abundantly. The trouble was that you oiled it too much. One of these beautiful examples of the reel-maker's art is fitted so closely that even the slightest coating of oil will impede the free running of its plates. Take your reel, therefore, if you feel you must dismount

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it, and clean it thoroughly with a piece of soft matchwood. Wipe it as clean as you can. Use the thinnest of oil and then wipe the oil off. When you put the reel together be careful to screw down with equal firmness all of the screws in the end plates. If one screw is tighter than the others, the plate will bind and the reel will not run free.

We are talking now of a high-grade, delicately adjusted reel. You may get many of more modern makes, not so delicately adjusted, which will give you less trouble perhaps—reels which you can take apart, rub down with a rag, oil abundantly, and put together again without any trouble. Take your choice as to these. If you are a good angler and true, in time you will have many reels, many rods—and many ideas; for this angling, whether with fly rod or bait rod, is a many-sided matter, and he who would lay down his own dictum for the following of others lacks wisdom in the first part and will always lack following in the second.

The modern tackle store usually is equipped with bait casting tackle according to the modern ideas—short rods, large guides, cheap reels, fool-proof appliances against back-lashing, good lines, and an unending multiplicity of baits, each one of which is guaranteed to beat all others in its alluring quality. It is not true that any of these painted plugs will

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kill bass at all times. Almost any one of them will kill some bass sometimes, for the bass is an irritable, truculent fish and, at least at certain seasons of the year, will run at almost anything you throw near him. I, personally, do not believe in fishing with gang hooks of any sort. One hook is enough for the bass caster of moderate tastes, or at most two hooks if one is fishing with live bait; sometimes a lip hook for a frog and another one lower down to catch the short striking fish will save an angler's patience. For my own part, I have never been very keen for weedless hooks, but take my own chance of fouling in the weeds—and allow the bass to have his chance. There are, however, many weedless hooks calculated to pass freely over lily pads and other cover customarily sought by bass. In fact, you can invest quite a sum of money in any good tackle shop in buying just a few of the things which will be recommended to you as the latest idea in bass casting.

You will find a small spoon hook with a single hook and a piece of split pork rind, a couple of inches long, about as apt to start something as almost any of the other baits. There are double and treble-blade spoons, wide spoons, narrow spoons, revolving spoons, beaded spoons, flanges which turn around inside the body of a wooden

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minnow, glass cylinders with live minnows inside them and hooks outside them, plugs, bugs, nipples, bulbs, feathers, glass, tinsel—all these things you can buy if you like, and probably you will like if you see them on the counter.

The art of bait casting originally had to do with the use of live bait, and the long rod of old gave a gentle delivery of a live bait. It is a cruel thing to cast a live frog, and the ordinary bait caster's outfit—certain dozens of live frogs squatting in a basket awaiting their turn at impalement and flinging half a hundred yards through the air, only to alight in a life-extinguishing thump on the water—that sort of thing does not stand analysis, although that sort of thing is precisely what bait casting is in its most usual phase. Therefore, kill your frog—rap his head over the side of the boat before you use him, since he must die. Depend for the rest upon your skill in delivering the dead frog and retrieving him so that he shall look alive.

When a bass strikes a frog or a minnow of any size, almost invariably he will do so from the side. I have seen a bass hold a frog, his head and legs sticking out the sides of his mouth, for what seemed to be two or three minutes, just lying still and not making a move! A bass will grasp a frog thus and move off several yards, usually, before he turns the

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frog and swallows it. Then he will start off at a faster gait. It is customary to wait for the second run of the bass, and it is thought better to wait too long rather than two short a time before striking.

The bass will rush quite a distance to seize a bait, and then return towards his lying ground, where always he will swallow the bait. Sometimes he will start down into deep water before he swallows it. The angler with live bait who has but a single hook takes his chances as to the time to strike. If he waits too long with a dead frog, perhaps the bass may reject it. If he strikes too soon, even with a live frog, perhaps he may pull the bait out of the bass' mouth. The man with the wooden minnow and many gangs does not miss many bass—it is impossible for the fish to strike the lure without getting fastened by several hooks. Thus fastened, he is not apt to fight very long or very well, even if he could against the stiff, short, and merciless rod which yanks him out.

Among all these different phases of the art you will, very naturally, pick out the one which pleases you best. The art of bait casting can be made a very beautiful and sportsmanlike one, and it can be made a very simple and efficient one. I am very clear in my own mind as to which I prefer. You take your choice—and always you pay your money.

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It takes two men to go bass fishing, one to row the boat and one to do the casting. It is rather difficult to handle the boat and cast at the same time. In the best form of practice the caster should lie thirty or forty yards outside the edge of the rushes whose pockets he is intending to work. If he is alone in his boat he may drift in too close, and so frighten the fish which he is approaching. The boat should advance slowly, and each little inlet among the rushes should be tapped with the bait. The best part of the sport is the savage rush with which the bass strikes the lure on the surface. Sometimes he will cast the white water far on either side of him as he seizes what he takes to be his prey. There are underwater lures, and in live bait fishing one often has the bass strike below the surface; but the surface work is the cream of bait casting, because thus one sees the strike of the quarry itself.

Most bait casting is done on lakes, and there are thousands of lakes in America which still offer sport and may do so forever if we practice any moderation and if we follow up fish culture as it should be followed. Sometimes, however, one wishes to cast for bass while floating down stream in a boat. Not long ago I saw a very good little wrinkle mentioned in a sportsman's paper. The writer described the use of a common garden rake

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as a boat anchor while floating down stream. The boat handler simply sits astern with the rake overboard. It is easy to guide the boat by pressure on this side or that, and easy to anchor it by pushing the rake into the mud or gravel when one comes to the place to stop. This is a tip worth remembering, and quite novel, as far as I know.

When you fish for bass in the summertime it is best, if possible, always to have a cake of ice wrapped up in a burlap sack and put in a box which will not leak. When you catch a bass kill him by putting the blade of a knife in at the back of the neck, and then put him at once on the ice and keep him cold until used. If the water is muddy or weedy it is better to clean the fish at once and then put it on the ice. The muddy taste is common among black bass taken from weedy waters in the summertime. It becomes much worse if the bass is allowed to lie undressed, or if it is allowed to get too warm. Sometimes skinning the fish instead of scaling it is better.

There is no fish which varies much more in quality on the table than the black bass. It all depends on the temperature and condition of the water in which it is taken. The flesh of the bass is high in proteids, much higher than that of most of the sea fishes, so that it is a fine food fish.

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There would seem to be little use in even referring to the old controversy about the game qualities of the large-mouthed bass and the small-mouthed bass. That depends on the temperature and rapidity of the waters in which they are taken. Either is a good fish. The large-mouthed black bass of the lakes is, however, ordinarily the more obliging of the two species, that is to say, more willing to absorb any sort of pointed contrivance which is slammed in his vicinity. After an experience of many years with this game fish I am unable to say whether he is the most courageous fish in the world or the biggest fool of all the fishes. In any case, he has offered sport for many generations of American anglers and will offer it for many and many a generation yet to come. There are scores of other ways of taking him, but the most sportsmanlike is with the old rod and reel; the most efficient is with the new rod and reel.

III

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WITHOUT sodium chloride life would not amount to much. There would be no sort of cooking which at any price would ever get an encore. There would be no packing or canning industries—indeed not very much commerce of any sort. The codfish would pass away; the mackerel would no longer delight the palates of those who dwell far from the stern and rock-bound coast. Without salt the waste of the world would be so enormously increased that the world could not carry its own burdens. Salt is a part of us as well as a part of the things that we use. From deer to diva, all the world needs salt. Doctors use it to infuse life into a waning circulatory system. Indeed, science figures out nowadays that it can come near producing life itself by means of certain saline reactions.

All of which is merely by way of saying that salt seems to have some strange revivifying effect on animal life. Give a horse a taste of rock salt and

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it becomes friskier. Cattle require salt occasionally. Deer and mountain-sheep will go any distance to a salt-lick. Even the cold-blooded and somewhat un-intellectual fish family seems to have sense enough to go once in a while to the sea when it has the chance. The strongest, gamiest, handsomest, and most toothsome of all our fishes are those which make the journey to the sea. Not without reason is the salmon called the king of all fishes.

There are salmon which never get to the sea but which still remain good examples of the salmon family—the ouananiche, or land-locked salmon of certain eastern lakes, is such a salmon—a good fish, and active, but one which does not attain to a quarter of the weight of members of the family which make the pilgrimage to the salt water.

A salmon somewhat similar to the land-locked salmon of the east is the steelhead of certain western rivers; but the steelhead, although he can live the year round in fresh water, is at his best when, like the salmon, he can make a pilgrimage to the ocean and back again to the fresh-water rivers. There is no gamer fish that swims than this same hammered-down, compact salmon. No matter what the scientists call him, he is a small and lusty trout of bold fresh water rivers, gone to sea and returned the better and stronger for it.

Courtesy of "Recreator,"

ATLANTIC SALMON JUMPING A DAM DURING THE "RUN" TO FRESH WATER FOR BREEDING





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The greatest of all steelhead rivers is the Rogue River of Oregon. The fish there run up to ten or twelve pounds at times and specimens of half that weight are by no means unusual. The Rogue River itself is one of the most beautiful rivers in all the world and passes through a mountain valley which is fairly to be called one of the beauty spots of the earth's surface. The river is a bold, rushing torrent, alternating rapids and pools—indeed an ideal salmon river. It has salmon also—the silver salmon of the sea, running in weight up to forty, fifty, even sixty pounds. If these fish would take the fly—if by any process of human ingenuity they could be coaxed to learn that habit—at once Oregon would spring into a fame which would reach to all corners of the world. There is not a more perfect salmon river out of doors than the Rogue River, and barring the king salmon himself, the steelhead is the one fish which ought to and which does occupy these waters.

Time was when the Rogue River produced steelheads in any quantity desired. Today there are still enough of the fish to offer fairly successful angling. There are good seasons and bad seasons, depending on the status of net fishing at the mouth of the river. Some of the Oregon towns think that all netting ought to be stopped so that the steelhead

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might make their way in numbers to the upper waters of the Rogue River. Other towns, more dependent upon the commercial fisheries, are in favor of leaving the nets at the mouth of the river. Sometimes there is a compromise measure on the statute books, under which commercial fishermen are allowed to net salmon at the mouth of the river but are obliged to return to the water all the steelheads taken in the nets. It is easily predictable what the result of this sort of law would be, and indeed is—the steelheads do not get returned to the ocean but find their way into tin cans with other salmon.

These things being as they are, it is without question true to say that the supply of steelhead salmon in the Rogue River is far less now than was once the case. The usual American custom is to use the gifts of Nature unsparingly. To an unprejudiced observer this does not seem the best form of business practice. The Rogue River, full of steelhead, in these days of increasing travel and decreasing sport, very soon would be one of the best publicity agents and one of the best revenue producers which Oregon could have.

As it was and as it is, however, the steelhead angling on the Rogue River is one of the most exciting forms of angling practiced in any land—indeed is one of the most difficult and dangerous. It far and

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away surpasses any salmon angling in all the qualities of skill and daring required for success—is indeed something unique in its own way. It has been the fortune of the writer to fight a forty-pound salmon on the Grand Cascepedia of Quebec, and surely in dignity and splendor there is no sport with the rod entitled to the palm over that form of salmon angling. None the less, it is free of risk and is pursued under conditions of ease and comfort as well as of safety. The excitement lies in the combat between the man and the fish.

In this Rogue River angling for steelhead, the case is quite otherwise. The combat between man and fish is there, but also the combat between man and Nature—Nature bent upon destruction, Nature riotous, dangerous and uncontrolled. For the angler seeking steelheads must take his life in his hands when he wades into that mountain torrent in pursuit of his sport. There are a few places on the river where a boat can be used, but boat fishing for steelhead is not *de rigueur*, and indeed is practically unknown. It is wading angling raised to the *n*th degree.

I think that of all the angling in the world this is of the highest class in those qualities requiring courage and skill alike—the acme of all angling with the fly; and this statement applies not only to ang-

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ling on this continent, but to that in any quarter of the world. Push it just beyond its natural status of risk and it is no longer part sport but all risk.

The Rogue River wader for steelhead takes his life in his hands no matter how good a swimmer he is. The water runs from two to twenty feet in depth; in many places the river is more than a hundred yards wide; while the momentum of the downcoming flood is something enormous. Any man who knows the downthrust of even a small rapid stream will know how to estimate the strength of this tremendous river.

Moreover, the footing is not always very secure. This is lava country and there are great rifts of lava rock here and there, lying like flat dams almost entirely across the course of the river. These may alternate with what the local men call "smooth rock," which offers at best only slippery, slithery footing for the wader. Now and again there are slant faults or upthrust bowlders of lava which send the water up in foam. Again there are long gravel reaches where deep and silent pools give the river a rest.

The trout fisher naturally makes toward the rapid water. Knee-deep seems pretty far on some of these white water channels; hip-deep is more than most strangers will care to undertake; but waist-deep and

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shoulder-deep the Rogue River angler of the first class will go. How he does it is an art not taken on at once by the stranger. Little by little the local man learns the bottom of the river, learns how to balance against it. There is quite an art in wading fast water, and a skillful mountaineer will cross a river where a tenderfoot would lose his footing at once. It is enough to say that the successful Rogue River angler must be bold enough to go in above waist-deep and be able to stand securely enough to cast a very long line even when thus half-submerged.

The fish have grown cunning of late years. They lie entirely out of reach of the shore. Wade your best, you must do fifty, sixty, seventy feet of line, and must keep your wits about you all the time. The fish itself has no mercy on the angler and in turn the angler himself feels at liberty to beach a steelhead whenever he gets the chance.

Sometimes large takes are made, but of late days the man who kills a half-dozen steelheads in a day is doing very well. His fish may run from three to eight, ten or even twelve pounds in weight. These larger fish in this bold and rushing water are, under the conditions which absolutely govern the sport, almost impossible to stop. Skillful anglers are content if they kill one out of five which strike. Indeed,

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take steelhead angling all the way through, the angler rarely breaks fifty-fifty with his quarry.

There are two schools of Rogue River steelhead anglers, those who stick to the fly and those who take to the spoon. The spoon used on the Rogue River is a singular affair, always of copper and very large, about the size proper for muskellunge angling in the Middle West. Once in a while a genuine salmon will strike one of these spoons; cases have been known where forty-pound fish have been killed by a trout angler. This spoon is usually handled as the native fisherman for bass works his frog bait—by means of a long cane pole and a line about as long as the pole.

You will see many of the local anglers, some of them mere boys, wading down the middle of this river, at times making a crossing from side to side. Every moment you expect to see them rushed downstream and so an end of it. But they pick their way along gingerly, slowly, more than waist-deep very often, sometimes supporting themselves with the butt of the cane pole (the reel is commonly put up five feet or so above the bottom of the pole in order to keep it dry). As such an angler wades down the stream he flogs the water on both sides as far as he can reach, and thus is indeed able to fish very handily the fast waters and the heads of

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pools lying below the rapids. It is perhaps true that more steelheads are caught on the cane pole and copper spoon than in any other way. Let no effete Easterner sneer at this style, for the betting is ten to one that he himself can not practice it. The art of holding one's footing on the smooth rock or on the uneven lava surfaces is one not picked up in a day.

The lesser school of steelhead anglers stick to the artificial fly. In fact, they are salmon anglers par excellence, although they are obliged to wade in order to angle; they can not, as in the case of many Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Quebec, and Norway salmon waters, fish from the shore.

The steelhead acts very much like *salmo salar*, but being a little more active and not quite so heavy as his greater cousin, he will hang more to white water and less to the pools. At the bottom or at the edge of some long, rough ridge of white water, where the waves run four or five feet high, he will lie behind some protecting rock, much like the salmon. Sometimes he will drop into a pool after the typical salmon fashion. His hang-out is most apt to be flanked by a rushing rapid of flung white water. When hooked he does not stick to his pool as a salmon is very apt to do, but makes at once for the current. What that means in the tax on

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single-hand tackle, any angler will know very well.

The Mississippi River bass fishing, where one may play a black bass ten or fifteen minutes in the heavy current, is a sort of kindergarten preliminary in the study of steelhead angling. The vigor of the fish on the line is something not quite understandable by the eastern angler who has never played this particular game. Pound for pound, in his own chosen conditions, the steelhead puts up a far fiercer, wilder, and more difficult fight than does the most difficult example of *salmo salar* in the highest priced salmon river in the world.

He is, moreover, democratic. There are no salmon preserves on the Rogue River as yet; it is open water for all the world. Very likely it always will be. Certainly if you took all the members of the swellest salmon clubs of Quebec and New Brunswick and put them on the Rogue River on foot, the fish they would bring in at night would not always be very imposing in the total.

Time was when the steelhead could be reached from the shores of the Rogue River with fair success, but he has learned a thing or two in the fight for life and today he is a wise, wise fish. He keeps out so that you are obliged to wade and wait for him if you want him. If you slip—good-by! The river gets you. Anglers do swim out of the Rogue

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River every once in a while, because they have to swim; no man who is not a bold swimmer has any business wading the Rogue. But sometimes, in very wild water, the angler does not get out. The writer fished with one skillful angler who admitted that he had lost a part of his nerve. "I saw my pal drowned before my eyes two years ago," said he. Each year at one place or another there is apt to be the record of a life lost. Still the sport itself is no such gruesome affair as the foregoing might seem to indicate. Its difficulties are those which can be circumvented by bold and hardy men.

Local anglers gradually learn contempt of the dangers. Gradually also they get a sort of instinct by which they can judge the bottom of the river. Indeed, they know the bottom like a book in the more familiar reaches which they often fish. If you wish to see Rogue River steelhead angling at its best, therefore, you would best go out with some of the more seasoned anglers of Ashland, Medford, or Grant's Pass, communities where this cult most flourishes. In these little cities one can get very comfortable accommodations and can readily get general directions for the river. The stranger, however, would be more or less helpless and there are few or no professional guides. One will find the angling sportsmen of this country the soul of

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hospitality, ready to help him learn the game, and so well acquainted with the difficulty of the game that they do not laugh at the inefficiency of the beginner.

In the Rogue River valley it is sometimes hot in the summer time—one hundred, one hundred and two, one hundred and five in the shade, and no one knows what in the sun. The heat does not seem oppressive but it has a tendency, when continued through a term of days or weeks, to drive the fish out into the deeper water. Very early morning or late in the evening will be the best time then to angle for steelheads. Throughout the day one might not get more than two or three strikes in reward for patient casting.

The rod for steelhead fishing must be very powerful, of course. The fish can be killed on the ordinary five-ounce or six-ounce trout rod, but one of eight or ten ounces, built short, stocky, and powerful, is better. It must be able to handle a long line, which means a heavy line, one practically of light salmon size. As the angler wades deep in the water there will be much line submerged in his casting, and his rod must be powerful in order to lift it—as must his wrist be also. Once the fish is hooked and free in that boiling torrent the rod has asked of it all that any rod can give. To be most efficient

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it must, in effect, be of just as much weight as one can handle single-handed with the heavy line.

The steelhead will follow the fancy of fresh-water trout in its selection of flies. In habits somewhat like the fresh-run salmon, it still rather favors the fresh-water trout, and it is not customary to angle for it with the gaudy flies which alone serve in salmon angling. In the summer evenings the local anglers favor gray hackles, brown hackles, or some modest fly of that description. Number one hook—large enough for any black bass in the world—is a favored size for that river. It is to be understood that the strain on the tackle is extreme. The hook must be large enough not to tear out of the fish's mouth. At times in the evening the coachman or even the white miller is found effective. Most anglers will change flies during the day as they do on any trout stream. The usual uncertainty as to what the steelhead actually is going to want is before you all the time. At the time of the writer's visit the gray hackle was perhaps the best fly in use.

In a river like this it is naturally some time before a fish can be subdued after it once is hooked. The angler will have a fight on his hands every minute of the time that he is engaged, he may rest assured of that. He sometimes will have rushing tactics, boring and sulking sometimes; but his fish,

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being smaller than a genuine salmon, will rush more, leap more, and be more active. Again, it will make extremely long runs; I have never seen any trout take off as much line at one run as the steelhead does.

Of course, in this sort of fishing the shoes are heavily hobnailed. Beyond that the angler does not wear very much of a costume. Waders would be out of the question; to be carried down in breast-high waders would mean death in that stream for any swimmer. Stripped to overalls and undershirt and wading shoes, these men go into battle—for battle it is in any just description. It is no wonder that the Rogue River takes a certain toll each year; but the veterans of the game do not find in it anything extra hazardous, and rather laugh at the idea of any apprehension on their account. Indeed, man is a curiously adaptive animal; he will become accustomed to any clime, to any occupation, to any hazard. The Rogue River angler, like the soldier accustomed to war, becomes hardened to the game and thinks nothing of it.

In play on the rod when actually hooked, the steelhead is a combination of all the artfulness, courage, and strength which exist anywhere in game fishes. He will rush like a muskellunge, tug like a black bass, sulk or rush like a salmon, and leap like

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a trout. A favorite maneuver on his part seems to be a sullen shaking of the head. You feel a series of short, savage jerks at the line as he tries to get latitude enough for bursting out into the heavy water where he knows that the current against his side will give him added leverage against the rod. He will always fight remote from the angler—fifty, sixty, seventy-five feet; so that in the dim light of evening it often is difficult to see clearly what the fish is doing, even when he jumps. Only out at the end of that tense strand of silk one feels something savage, courageous, fearless. Take this feeling, with that inspired by the river, and the angler is not always sure whether he is the pursued or the pursuer.

Good tactics require that the angler shall lead his fish into quiet water as soon as possible. Sometimes that means that he must wade across deeper channels of water between the reef where he has been standing and the shore, distant perhaps fifty or sixty yards. I have seen anglers come in across these deeper gaps, wading chin-deep, rod held above the head, all the time fighting a five-pound fish eighty feet away. There are times when the strain of the fish on the rod will serve to overbalance a wading angler.

For the table the steelhead is edible, as are all members of the salmon family. He is hard and

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muscular, however, and the flesh is a trifle dry. I did not find it so palatable as that of the Atlantic salmon of Quebec. The local anglers, used to the fish, do not much prize it—or indeed any fish—once it has come to the basket. To strangers who see the species for the first time, the short, thick, sturdy, muscular, little salmon appears to be as delectable as any fish.

Oregon has found fame in wheat, in apples, in many other things. In a mild way something is known in the angling world about the steelhead angling of the Rogue River and other Oregon streams, but thus far the sport has been rather local. Once its fame becomes generally known, the Rogue River ought to be one of the select angling waters of all the world. The sportsman of any land who can say that he has to his own rod killed a six-pound steelhead in the Rogue while wading waist-deep is entitled to respect in any group of anglers. Thousands of men have killed their salmon skillfully and comfortably and enjoyably, but you will number in less than hundreds the fly-fishermen who ever have killed their steelhead, fair and square, heel and toe, they and the Rogue River for it, and the devil take the hindmost. If this is not the top notch of fly-fishing for all the world, I do not know where to look for it.

IV

THE INCONNUE—WHAT IT IS NOT

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WHO of sporting tastes has not from his boyhood read of the voyages of the early explorers of the sub-Arctic regions—Hearne and Pond and Mackenzie, and those others who went North before there were even those cartographic bluffs which now pass as maps of that far-off country? And which of us, so reading, has not retained some vague remembrance of the mysterious animal known as the inconnue, found in the fauna of that far-off land?

Such, at least, was my own youthful experience. Later on, passing from callow youth, when I had ceased to read of early voyageurs and was trying to pay for a dress suit on the installment plan—which fully occupied my mind for some years—I still retained a hazy idea that somewhere up North there was an animal which Sir Alexander Mackenzie had been unable to place and which he had called the what-is-it or the unknown or the inconnue. In my trusting soul I hoped one day to meet an inconnue, whatever it might be.

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It never occurred to me at that time to look in the dictionary or the encyclopedia to learn about this mysterious critter. Never, indeed, until long after I had first met the inconnu in mortal combat did I consult the encyclopedia. Since that time I have never touched my forelock, as was once my wont, whenever passing in front of my encyclopedia —because, in good sooth, the encyclopedia knows no more about the inconnu than any of the rest of us.

All the way north from the edge of the Rocky Mountains in the Athabasca system we heard the swarthy voyageurs—you yourself would be swarthy if you used soap no oftener than they do—speak in hushed tones of the inconnu, which, they said, we were sure to meet in our dangerous voyage in the extreme northern country.

Each time they spoke of it I grasped my trusty rifle tighter, resolved to sell my life as dearly as possible if attacked by one of these ferocious creatures. We had men with us who had killed big game all the way from New Zealand to New Jersey; but none of them had ever met the inconnu.

On deck at night, under the paling Northern sun, we held councils of war discussing questions of proper equipment; and, new to that land, we resolved to do our best to uphold the traditions of American sportsmanship, though then under the

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British flag—which, of course, has more traditions than any other in regard to sport. In plain United States, we resolved to give any inconnue a run for its money if it ever locked horns with us. At that time we thought it had horns.

Time passed and we saw no inconnue, though we gumshoed round the camp every night looking for tracks. We got to Fort MacMurray and still had seen none. Most of the population of Fort MacMurray bears the name of Loutit, on account of an active ancestor who arrived there some years ago and established a family tree which is still growing; but not even any of the Loutit family, which covers several degrees of latitude, had ever seen an inconnue there. Neither, though we kept a sharp watch day and night with field-glasses, did we discover any inconnue all the way down the river to Lake Athabasca.

No one at Chippewyan had ever heard of an inconnue in that neighborhood. We began to think we had been made victims of a cruel hoax, and we rechristened the inconnue as the bull-connue, classifying it with the jokes about the handle of a valve or the insects among the type which are shown to the cub compositor in a printing office.

When we reached Smith's Landing at the falls of Great Slave River, the plot began to thicken. We

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were told that sixteen miles below, at the foot of the rapids, we should surely find the inconnu; but though we oiled up our guns and prepared for the "imminent deadly breach," we did not see the said inconnu according to schedule.

"You'll see one before long if you keep on going north," said the captain of our steamboat.

We did not see him, however, though we kept on going north. We passed into Great Slave Lake and inquired at Fort Resolution whether the inconnu had come so far south on its annual migration, but there was nothing doing either there or at Fort Rae, according to the best obtainable reports. We had, in fact, arrived at Hay River—where there is no hay—before, by the merest accident, I first met an actual inconnu.

In all this time on the river steamboat we had been, as one may say, almost on the point of mutiny over the kippered herring and tinned salmon which made a good part of the bill of fare. At Hay River, in a fit of desperation, I chartered an Indian boy and rowed about four miles to run some nets which he or someone else owned, and which might or might contain some fish, not as yet, in tin cans.

Arrived there, the said Indian youth casually began to unload from the nets into the boat a bunch

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of fish which left me helpless with amazement. This was on the reefs at the edge of Great Slave Lake, near the mouth of Hay River. The boy, with whom I had been unable to establish any sort of lingual understanding, began to pull out suckers, whitefish, and jackfish—which we call pike—until our leaky skiff looked as though it were getting ready to sink at any moment.

I heard him thumping at something in the net and he casually hauled over the gunwale a twenty-five-pound lake trout, repeating the act an instant later with yet another and larger one. Also he uncoiled several whitefish that would be worth, at city retail prices, about fifteen dollars each. Still he was not content.

After a time he flung behind him into the boat a long, silverish-looking fish which I saw at once was a whitefish—and later saw was nothing of the sort. It was not a salmon or a sucker or a whitefish or a pike-perch, or like any one of them, but a good deal like all of them.

In short, it was an inconnue! All the specimens of inconnue we took from these nets—I have often wondered whose nets we really were running—were stiff and dead, with their mouths wide open, though none of the other fish taken in the gill-net were dead. My attention being thus called to the mouth of the

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fish, I found it to be almost square, with a sort of projecting rim, so that it stuck out in front of the fish's countenance something like the mouth of the sucker; only it was larger and more directly east of the fish's face.

Each of the specimens we took ran eight or nine pounds, being small, as I found later. The tail was not square like that of any of the salmon family, but forked. Yet to my astonishment I found the fatty little caudal fin which is supposed to be distinctive of the salmon family. The body was not the shape of a salmon's but more like that of a giant whitefish, somewhat flattened, the general lines being those of the pike-perch or wall-eyed pike, except that the mouth was quite different—also the head and everything else.

Naturally I could not name this fish at the time, though I examined it with curiosity. Thus far I had been unable to diagnose the parentage of my companion, whether French, Scotch, or English—I could never get used to a half breed who says “cawn’t” instead of “can’t”; but having tried him in French, Spanish, Cree, Chippewyan, and Black-foot, I concluded to try English, knowing that he was a mission boy.

“What in blazes do you call this thing?” I asked him.

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“That?” said he. “Why, that’s a conny. Didn’t you know it?”

Now “conny” is Hudson Bay for inconnu.

I sat and gazed at this creature for some time. It did not look dangerous but, rather, quite decidedly mild, especially as it was dead, the only dead fish taken in the net. It had a reminiscent sort of look, like some of the jokes in the Sunday newspaper.

“I have seen your face before,” you say sometimes when you meet a gentleman who will not tell you his name. I had never seen this face before, and neither had the artist who made its picture in the encyclopedia—a portrait which resembles the inconnu about as much as an art photograph of a dramatic celebrity looks like the same celebrity before breakfast. Even so, the picture is quite as accurate as the context which goes with it in the average encyclopedia.

We paddled back to our steamship and displayed our fish, much to the joy of the kippered passengers. The deckhands, the purser, the captain, the soldiers, villagers, and others all leaned over the rail of the steamboat and looked at our mysterious strangers and said: “Conny, huh?” After that I felt the report did not lack confirmation. It was thus that one of my boyhood’s dreams came true. We had met the inconnu and it was ours!

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We ate the inconnu then and many times afterward, far above the Arctic Circle. It has not the taste of the salmon at all. Served often on the same table with whitefish, we found that after a time we gravitated toward the dish of whitefish, which is more delicate though also fat. There is perhaps a slight richness or oiliness in the taste of the inconnu.

One is apt to eat rather too much of it at first, especially if one has undergone a preparatory course of kippered herring. None the less it is an excellent table fish and as such it is put up by thousands and hundreds of thousands in the Far North; also, as food for dogs. I saw many great specimens of this fish, split open along the back—like your wife's party gown—as they always open fish in the North, and hung out to dry around Indian camps. At Fort McPherson I saw two taken from one net which I thought would weigh forty pounds apiece, and I have heard they go to sixty pounds.

The inconnu is not a salmon but it is more of a sporting fish than any but the Atlantic salmon. It strikes the trolling bait freely, is not shy, and puts up quite a scrap in spite of its squarehead look. It was one of the regrets of our Northern trip that we had no flyrod along with us. I would gladly have given a hundred dollars for a flyrod during

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one evening's sport with Arctic trout and grayling on the streams of the Rocky Mountains about a hundred miles south of the Arctic Ocean. There is no angling like it in any country I have ever seen.

And again I would have given a like sum for half a day's sport with a good casting rod and proper lures at any of several localities we saw where the inconnu was present in full force. We took these fish on rude tackle—that is to say, others did. I would not give a snap to take game fish in any way but on a good rod, giving them a sporting chance and myself sporting experience as well. In short, the inconnu has never received the full meed of praise that should be his, nor has he often been allowed a sporting chance. He lives for the one purpose of poking his head into a gill-net so that you may eat him. He even relieves you of the trouble of killing him, for you always find him dead. He is the most amiable of fishes, the most unsung, unknelled and unknown.

At Fort McPherson, which is thirty miles up the Peel River, a tributary of the Mackenzie, we found the connies quite abundant, and we then heard of different localities in the neighborhood where the natives had always found them in regular supply. Such a place we found on the Husky River, one of the delta branches of the Mackenzie, at the mouth

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of a little creek leading back into some inland lakes.

We did not learn that the connies ever went into the lakes, but here at the mouth of this little creek they were schooling in thousands, and we were told that this was always held to be a certain fishing place by the natives who travel up and down that river. The scene here was much like that of a salmon run in the salt water a day or so before the fish move up into some fresh-water stream.

Here, however, there was no salt water, neither did the fish jump free into the air; but they kept the surface churned up in hundreds of waves where only their backs and shoulders showed. They were supposed to be feeding on minnows, but we could not see any minnows, though the fish often broke within a few feet of us, apparently feeding.

When we made our encampment at this spot we were hungry, as everyone in the North is all the time; and when one is short of grub in the North he goes after connies if possible. We had no net with us and no fishing rods nor any bait. Fortunately, under some sneaking sort of notion that we might have trolling for lake trout, I had taken along, against all counsel, a few assorted sizes of trolling spoons. These we now put into commission, lacking anything better.

One of the party tried to use a clumsy willow rod,

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but he was clumsy himself, not used to fishing, and so lost several fish which struck directly at the side of the boat. The other fisherman was a trapper who lived in that country. He caught six or eight fine connies on a stout hand line and spoonhook, simply by throwing the spoonhook out as far as he could and pulling it in hand over hand. It was a crude method, but it worked.

A gill-net set across that stream at that time would either have been torn to pieces or taken out full of these great fish. My admiration for the conny rose very distinctly, and it was then that above all things I honed, sighed, and pined for anything in the most remote manner resembling a fishing rod and reel. Then and there I forgave the conny for looking like a sucker, a whitefish, and several other fishes which it is not.

Many a man takes down a good salary by handing out solemn stuff about vomers, and supramaxillaries, and palatines, because he is pretty sure no one is going to call him on his statements; but none of these gentlemen in their recorded works, albeit abbreviated to meet the needs of the encyclopedias, tells us about the personal habits of the inconnue or attempts to explain the bar sinister that seems to prevail in its family.

Even in the North, where the entire population

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lives on conny half the year and hope and whitefish the other half, there seems to be no one who knows very much about this mysterious fish. I could not learn whether or not it comes out of the ocean, whether or not it is ever taken in salt water. I could not learn its spawning season, though I presume it to be in the spring or early summer. We know all about fur seals but no one describes the pelagic pursuit of the inconnu amid the unknown islands of the North.

In appearance the fish did not in the least resemble a salmon which has come out of salt water, reached its spawning grounds, and dropped back. It is a bright, clean silver color; the scales are rather coarse, more like those of the whitefish than of the salmon, which, of course, scarcely seems to have scales at all. Even in the muddy water far up the Mackenzie River it retains this clean look, though the Athabasca, the Great Slave and parts of the Mackenzie are among the dirtiest waterways of the entire world.

The inconnu seems to survive sediment. So far as known, it never is found south—that is to say, upstream—beyond the great rapids of the Great Slave River, between Fort Smith and Smith's Landing. That sixteen miles of wild waters seems a sort of dividing line between tame things and wild

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things, when it comes to that, between known things and the unknown, between us and the inconnue.

Well, anyway, we saw the inconnue, bearded it in its den, and survived.

As to the inconnue itself, it has no very exact portrait at present extant and up to date. Much as I desired it, there was never any camera when there was any inconnue—except once, when the results were not wholly satisfactory but good enough to show the facial contour of the fish and the size it sometimes attains. So far as known, this is the only photograph of the inconnue to find its way out.

The great aim in the life of the fish seems to be to enshroud itself in mystery and gill-nets. We are obliged to leave it in full possession of the field and holding down its reputation and its name. We should protest its loose classification under the name *Inconnu stenodus Mackenzii*. Mackenzie had no stenodus or stenogus at all. True, its name may be a case of bad handwriting. The fish itself seems to be a case of careless handicraft on the part of Nature.

V

IN THE JEWEL BOX

V

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THAT gay gentleman, Philippe, Duc d'Orléans, Regent of France following the death of Louis XIV, organized his life, in general, on the principle that everyone loves a cheerful spender. At times, however, he would sigh with regret that the lower classes, peasantry or canaille, were disposed to be resentful about their taxes, he being well advised that if the taxes were taken away from him he could not continue his little suppers.

A friend of the Regent was the Duc de Saint-Simon, author of the best memoirs of his time and an excellent Boswell to the Grand Monarch and the Gay Regent alike. This worthy duck, duke, or duc was ever a steadfast counselor to the mighty always to be mighty and always, so to speak, to throw out a front. One conversation between the Duc de Saint-Simon and the Regent was on the question of buying another diamond for the enrichment of the crown jewels of France—and incidentally for the

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pleasance of the Regent and the ladies. Saint-Simon describes the matter thus:

“By extremely rare good fortune a servant employed in the diamond mines of the Great Mogul found means to secrete about his person a diamond of prodigious size. To complete his good fortune he safely arrived in Europe with his diamond. He showed it to several princes, none of whom were rich enough to buy, and carried it at last to England, where the King desired it, but could not resolve to purchase it. A model of it in crystal was made in England; and the man, the diamond and this model were introduced to the financier, John Law, then prominent in Paris, who proposed to the Regent that he should purchase the jewel for the King. The price dismayed the Regent, who refused to buy.

“The state of the finances was an obstacle on which the Regent much insisted. He feared blame for making so considerable a purchase while the most pressing necessaries could only be provided for with much trouble. I praised his sentiment, but said that he ought not to regard the greatest king of Europe as he would a private gentleman; that this was a glory for his regency that would last forever; that, whatever might be the state of the finances, the saving obtained by the refusal of the jewel would not much relieve them—in fact, I did

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not quit Monsieur le Duc d'Orléans until he had promised that the jewel should be bought. . . . The bargain was concluded on these terms. Monsieur le Duc d'Orléans was agreeably surprised by the applause the public gave to an acquisition so beautiful and so unique. The jewel is known as the Regent's Diamond."

We do not have kings and crown jewels and regents in this little old Republic of our own. Mostly we have business. But we have been so successful, and are now so great and rich, that before long it will be our duty to hand down to later generations some objective proof of our own greatness and richness. We must some time be able to say that we can afford all these unused things of value and can lock them up to show to other generations—that is to say, like most rich and successful persons, some time in our career we shall want to offer proof that we do not have to save the nickels any more and that now and then we can afford a little leisure.

What are our American jewels? Some time they will be cathedrals, museums and art galleries. Meantime—and also some time—they will be our splendid mountains, our wildernesses, our sporting out-of-doors, where a man can wear a blue shirt and swear by the nine gods.

Speaking of jewels, however, are you familiar

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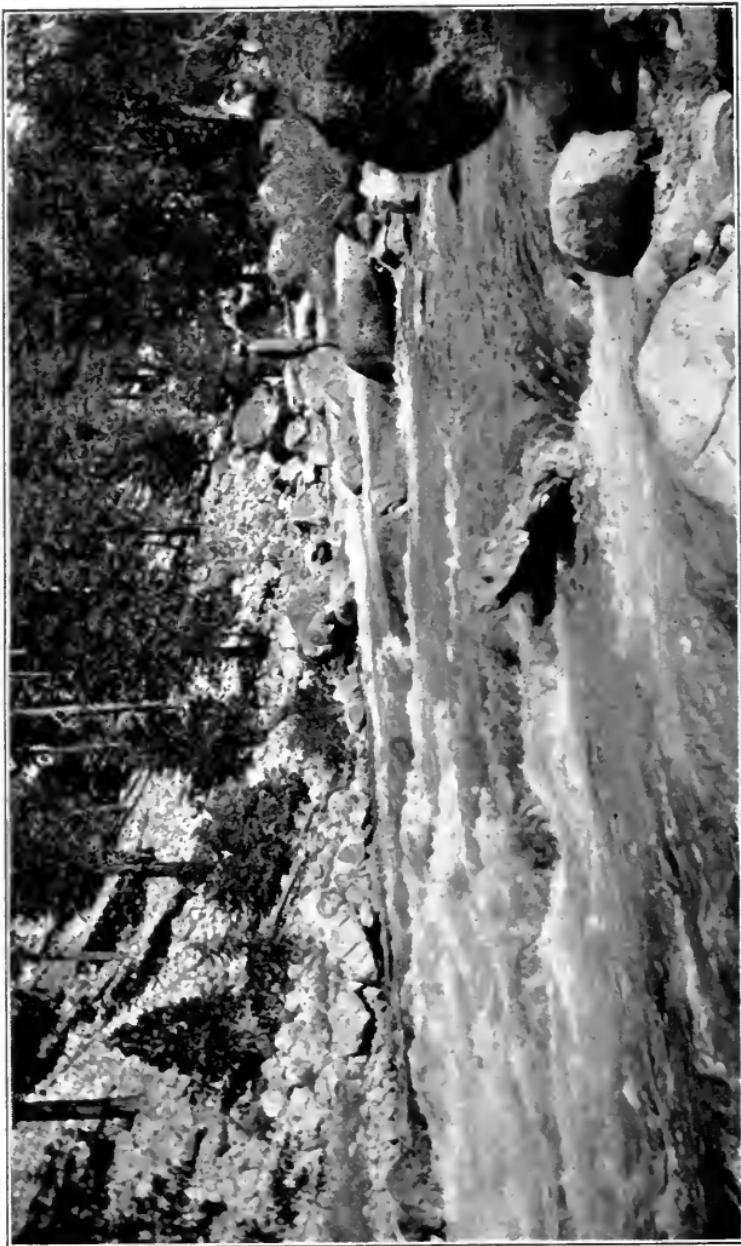
with the Sierra? - The Rockies? Do you know how exceedingly beautiful Nature is in some of the most favored portions of those countries, how extremely fascinating they are in the best of Nature's moods? In the high mountains the air is so brilliant it carries an actual sting, almost like that of diamond rays. The grass and the trees are as green as emeralds—not less. The blue of the cloudless sky—so much bluer than you ever can see blue in lower or moister countries—is deep sapphire, or sapphire plus something.

The sunset is made up of a million giant opals. Topaz and tourmaline lurk in all the rocks. Lapis lazuli and aquamarine lie at the bottom of all the lakes. Have you never sat on the high shoulder of some hill, up near the clouds, where the wind blew clean, and felt the same fascination you experienced when you looked at a mass of glittering gems—jewels accumulated by some monarch who could afford to buy them and keep them—just as this Republic can afford to buy and keep the best of its mountain landscapes?

It is enough simply to be alive in the high Sierra, in the upper Rockies—above the timber line, up near the snow. Lower down, also, the scent of the pines, the taste of the white water, the sight of the blue, wavering pennant of the camp fire—these are

Photograph by E. Hough.

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almost delight enough; but if carnal man demands trout for the table, why, then it is boots and saddle, and, rod under leg, one rides even deeper into the wilderness.

Who has not felt, betimes, the spell of the mountain river roaring down out of its high sources, white over the rocks, deep and cool green in the pools? It is in human nature to want to follow any such stream clear to the head. There never were trout so large that one did not think there were trout a little larger farther up. One baskets a trout or so from this pool, almost grudging the time, because it is simply necessary to go on and on. That is ambition, that is human nature. But what a glorious experience it is to follow a mountain river back into the high mountains, with no strings to draw one back to camp at any given day, to go back into the mountains beyond the tin-can zone—so difficult a thing from Panama to Nome today!

I recall a little trip not long ago where we followed a bold river back and up until it became a thread with lakes strung on it, until we had reached the last lake, almost up to the clouds. Such an experience is more than a mere fishing trip; it is close touch with the rare and beautiful things, the jewels, the condensed wealth of the world.

Old John the Ranger knew there were trout there,

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but it almost made no difference when we looked out over the lake from a high shore, studying the bars for good fishing places. Old John grumbled a bit when he saw the head of the lake still stained a trifle with glacier water.

"Just the luck!" said he. "I've caught some old whales right up there."

There were no tin cans on this lake. It has seen but few visitors in all its many, many days. Its shores have never been laid out for the use of man. As beautiful as apples of gold in pictures of silver, it was rough-set in great bowlders which had come down in the snowslides in years past. These rocks, hid deep in alders and willows, lay for half a mile, to weary and entangle the angler—if any angler can be weary. The cover came so close to the water that it was impossible to get out a back cast; but we hardly looked where we were going. Out in the lake, beyond reaching distance from the shore, the trout were rising—and there was no boat or raft!

All anglers are resourceful, and there was need of resource here. We studied the shore line, regarding some of the giant bowlders, big as a church, which had rolled on out into deep water, and—for thus does Nature leave her secrets unguarded ever—leading out to one of these big bowlders we found

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a sort of giant stair of lesser stones. A step here, a jump there, and we were on a flat-topped rock, with room to cast, and over twenty feet of water as clear as any diamond in the world.

Old John chews tobacco and fishes with worms. I have never seen on a human face an expression of greater content than that on his as he sat down and, reaching into his pocket for a plug of twist, bit off one vast and blissful chew.

There did not seem to be any trout at all. Out beyond us the transparent water became less and less so, until it reached a twilight zone of translucence, fading into the opaque. I cast a long line out, as far as I could reach, cast again and again. A grand trout struck the fly and I brought him in steadily, brilliant and beautiful as a whole casket of spilled jewels. And back of him came a whole procession of dark, graceful forms, converging from below, beyond, and on every side! We had been on the rock a couple of minutes and here were fifty trout in sight! I need say little more.

Old John and I took them out as we liked, methodically, carefully, and reverently. I never saw even the roughest man who did not have reverence for a trout, and John was not one of the rough. We stopped and admired them now and then, as anglers will. The climax of our entertainment came when

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old John, chewing most vigorously, gave an exclamation and nodded toward the arch of his rod. He had on two trout—one very large, for he was using a little fly above his baited hook.

“That blame thing come right out from under this rock,” said he, “and chased my fish; and then he grabbed that little fly—and looky yonder! There’s another one just as big. We’ve been settin’ on them all the while an’ didn’t know it!”

Where those two great trout came from we never really did know, but John landed his double. And while he was doing so I cast a gentle fly over the other big one; he fastened, and was ours.

How blissful the slow and gentle ride back to camp after a day such as that, the old packhorse squattering along, with plenty of trout in the panniers! I presume trout do have something to do with the bliss of one’s soul at such a time, but none the less I assert that I caught old John looking at the sunset.

“Ain’t it a fine day?” we said one to the other more than once, apropos of nothing in particular save that it had indeed been a remarkably fine day. I do not now remember how many trout we had, but I do remember the toothed, white sky line of the Sierra. And I know how green the pool was by our camp, and how blue the smoke looked when we

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came riding down. Apples of gold in pictures of silver!

And not long ago, at another time, it was in the Rockies—the Rockies where they rise high and sharp directly from the plains. Here and there from their tall sides come down little streams which, when they reach the lower valleys, wind among willows, and through beaver meadows, and sometimes over gravel bars and between high banks. We were traveling by motor car and we paused at such a stream—just big enough for big trout, just deep enough to be crossed on the bars here and there, just wide enough for easy casting without entanglement—the sweetest, decentest trout water you ever saw.

“Now if only there really were trout,” I began, “wouldn’t it be ideal?”

“Two and three pounds—plenty of them,” said Jack, who here was our leader. “Some womenfolks caught six here the other evening, right by the bridge. They lie right under the willows, hunting hoppers now.”

It was late afternoon, but our party announced that we needed trout for breakfast. Therefore, while the others assumed points of vantage along the shores, whence they could easily offer advice, criticism and derision if need be, I got into my waders,

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strung up as good a rod as the best maker in the world ever made, appending as good a reel as ever was made and using a tapered leader—a better one I never saw. Thereto I added a fly as much resembling a grasshopper as might be.

The water was cold when I stepped in—cold, and clear as crystal. The sky was blue, with some little white clouds, and a strong wind was coming down from the mountains where the Indians say the Old Windmaker lives. I did not really much care whether I caught any trout or not. Not so, however, the waiters on the bank, who were disposed to be utilitarian in their notions!

I struck one fine fish and lost him without seeing him at all, but round the very next bend, at a spot which was absolutely ideal in every regard—tell me, have you not almost always been disappointed with these ideal spots?—I raised a regular story-book trout in a story-book place. In these ideal surroundings, whether or not the rest of the picture was ideal, I certainly played him to such effect that by and by he was on the gravel bar—two pounds and better.

“Come on down here!” called out a voice, by this time a trifle more respectful. “They are jumping all over.” This from the feminine contingent, who had always been a trifle vague as to how trout

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are taken, though well advised as to how they are eaten.

I waded down to the head of a big semicircular pool. Pound trout, two-pound trout and pound-and-a-half whitefish were breaking there on the evening feed. From their position on the steep bank, thirty feet above the pool, the watchers could see every fish distinctly, though I could not.

“A little farther down—no, to the right—no, this way—there he is!” Someone on the bank was going to be a trout enthusiast if this kept up. And it did keep up until our little party thought the basket had enough for breakfast. I do not recall any pleasanter trout party in all my life.

All of us “true sportsmen” pose a bit. We like to talk about the beauties of Nature and pretend that we do not care for the fish or birds at all. That is part of the doctrine of being a true sportsman, perhaps. Yet I found my own mental impressions so confused, whether by the trout or the sunset, whether by the green of the willows round us, or the blue of the sky above and the white of the glaciers between, that I am on the point of saying I cared not at all for those fish, and only for the sunset and the wind—and maybe the contented look of one or two who occasionally peered into the

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basket as we rode, to assure themselves that the breakfast was still there.

And there was another time, not so long ago, in another of our great wilderness refuges. Near by the beaten trails other anglers had whipped the life out of the stream. One man offered, however, who knew a thing or two. We went out in the afternoon, five or six miles, and caught thirty trout, some around a pound. I was delighted but, as for him, he was scornful.

"You don't call those fish?" said he. "You wait. Tomorrow I'll show you some real trout."

The next day we mounted our trusty buckboard and rode to the end of the trail. Then we drove five miles farther, up a cañon and across country where a team and buckboard could not possibly go—but where they did go, none the less. We came out on a strange mountain meadow. For three miles our mountain river flattened and lay calm. Off to the east rose the notched Absorakas.

"There's lots of 'em in here," said my companion. "I come here about once a year. I don't believe anybody's been here this summer. There's hardly any little ones in here at all. You won't catch one as small as a pound in weight."

It sounded like the imagination piscatorial at its best, but it was literally true. In all my life I have

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never seen such a stream as that for big trout, nor have I ever seen conditions more comfortable.

Two or three times I raised one big one which I thought was an earlier acquaintance. At last, from my position above, I could see him come up slowly and deliberately, a heavy, thick-shouldered fish; four and a quarter pounds he was. When I struck him I soon found the five-ounce rod did not control him, and he walked round pretty much as he pleased.

After a long struggle we got this heavy, dull fish into the net and incidentally added to him the two other fish that may or may not have been the ones I had raised on the same bank previously—at least, we declared they were. And when we went to camp for lunch and cleaned up our trout, we found what had made our big trout so thoughtful. He had that morning eaten a bullfrog a little longer than my hand! I have sometimes heard it said that trout do not care for frogs.

When we lifted our box into the buckboard that evening it was heavy with trout, very heavy. Perhaps—for one ought to be honest in such matters—the heaviness of the box may have left my reason not wholly calm and dispassionate; but, though I cannot swear whether we had twenty-four or twenty-six trout, I can swear that never was mountain wind sweeter, never was mountain valley more

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beautiful, never was sky more blue or mountains more wholly delectable than those.

They are our jewels, these things set apart. Sometimes—unless I happen to be broke at the time—I am ready to say that saving the last cent you can is not all there is to life. Sometimes, especially when far back and high up in the wilderness, I am ready to say the old Regent was not so far wrong. There are a few things a great and rich people can afford just to lock up and lay away. You do not look at a jewel box every day—only once in a while; but it is comfortable to know that you have jewels on the ice.

VI

THE GREAT-GAME FIELDS OF THE
WORLD



VI

THE GREAT-GAME FIELDS OF THE WORLD

PERHAPS you paid a hundred and fifty, two hundred, or two hundred and fifty dollars for the grizzly-bear rug in your den. If you have a perfect tiger rug in the reception hall your friends will know you once had at least five hundred dollars or else your credit was good. Try to kill your own grizzly or your own tiger, and you will think that the only time you ever solved the high-cost-of-living puzzle was when you bought the skins and did not try to kill the animals at first hand.

That you could today take a thousand dollars and go out and kill a grizzly bear with your own rifle is very doubtful. Very likely you might be obliged to make several trips before you found one. Certainly you would have to go a long distance and outfit at considerable expense. A friend of the writer got a grizzly in Canada last spring. It required a forty-days' trip with a pack train. The betting is a thousand to one that you will never kill a grizzly inside the United States. There are a few

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left but not many, and all are rather highly trained in suspiciousness and resourcefulness. Colorado now has a bill before it looking toward the protection of the grizzly bear. All the old bear stories of history used to teach us that the grizzly bear was the one creature in the world which could take care of himself, but he could not. Today the grizzly is one of the most timid of wild animals, one of the least dangerous, and one of the most expensive.

As for the cost of a lion or tiger hunt, it runs into so much money that the average American hunter cannot figure on it at all. The successful great-game hunter of today must have not only sporting qualities but financial resources to back him up.

Where are the great-game countries of the world today? This question has been much to the fore of late, for within the last five years there have been more great-game trophies brought to America than in any fifty years of the earlier history of this country. More and more you hear about some of our best people who have felt it incumbent on them to go out and do something sporting in the way of big game. The heads of the mountain sheep, of the elk, of the many beautiful African antelopes, of the great Cape buffalo, the skins of this or that animal known or unknown to the public—these things you

Photograph by E. Hough.

How ABOUT IT?



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see more and more about you in the homes of your wealthy friends. They have attached to them curious stories, and all these represent definitely the swift changes in the sporting world.

You may mark almost all of North America—or at least most of the United States—off the map now as big-game country. The best of our best people no longer hunt in the United States. Of course, we still kill a great many deer and a considerable number of elk, once in a while a mountain sheep, and rarely a good bear in one or another part of the United States. To use even these dwindling resources in a big-game hunt is rather an expensive business today. We used to figure it at about fifteen dollars a day, average cost for each person, when using a pack train. Today you would better push the cost up to twenty or twenty-five dollars a day for each man of the party.

A thousand or fifteen hundred dollars for a good head is not thought very expensive by some of our best people who hunt in America, though often more success is bought for less money by those who know the how and where of it. You can take five thousand dollars and go to Africa, or, if you wish to take along a moving-picture outfit—which, as we say in Chicago, is quite *au fait* today—you can run the expenses up to thirty-five thousand for a long

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safari and not attract a great deal of attention among our very best people.

British East Africa for some years has been very much in the public eye as a great-game country. They have taken good care of that country, have established high game licenses and more than one big-game preserve; yet, none the less, returning sportsmen say that game is harder to get there now than it was a while ago and that good specimens are rare. In short, British East Africa, far away as it seems, is relatively already on the point of being pretty well shot out—rather an extraordinary thing to believe and yet very true. The European war has taken away a great deal of the sporting travel which has been going to the country accessible via Nairobi, so that within the next two years we may look to a great increase of game in those fairly well-known fields.

German East Africa is a better game field than British East Africa, but is much less known and more difficult of access. In general it is a certain proposition that if you are a good shot and have enough money, you can go easily to one or the other of the East African districts and get yourself lion, buffalo, elephant and rhino, as well as countless specimens of the beautiful African antelope. That is not so good a hunting country as Lewis and Clark

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found in the American West a hundred years ago. What will it be a hundred years hence? Will not its story be the same as that which the country of Lewis and Clark shows today?

Most of us are obliged to do our big-game hunting closer at home, so we accept the compromise forced on us by civilization and meekly go for a rather tame big-game hunt to Wyoming, Ontario, Nova Scotia, or New Brunswick, where we can find elk or moose, caribou or deer. Not so long ago one could go to Manitoba and get not only moose but elk; but the elk of that country, as well as of Northern Minnesota, are now almost a negligible quantity in sport and ought not to be pursued too closely.

In the Canadian Rockies there are a few mountain sheep where the Indians have not killed them off, an occasional grizzly, and, in certain districts, rather an abundance of white goats. In our own Rockies there is a fairly sure chance to get an elk—probably with nothing like the sort of antlers which could be found twenty years ago. Not even these dwindling antlers would be available, except for the great-game preserve of Yellowstone Park. A few states still allow mountain sheep to be shot, and in different parts of the Rockies blacktail or mule deer are fairly abundant. In the Cascade system, as we may call the upthrust of our mountains which

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run up into British Columbia north of the line; or in the Selkirks and upper Rockies, there are—especially in the western ranges—some mountain sheep and a good many goats, but very rarely a grizzly now. The crossing of that country by the Grand Trunk Pacific has or soon will put an end to certainty of great sport. The local guides and outfitters, of course, will hardly agree with this statement, though it is a very fair one.

The best outdoor country and the best big-game country the world ever saw ran along the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, in the foothills or the edge of the high plains, from Alberta south to Arizona. That country is pretty well exhausted now. There are a very few antelopes in Saskatchewan, and from there south to Arizona there is not one state where an antelope can be or at least ought to be killed today. The species is passing away so rapidly that we ought not to kill antelopes at all for a long time.

In Arizona, in the remote desert regions, and in a part of desert California, there are a few antelopes left—not many. There are about twelve in the area close to the petrified forest, between Adamana and Holbrook. There are about a dozen near the mouth of Chevelon Creek, near Winslow. Southwest of Winslow, about forty-five miles from the

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railroad, there are two or three bunches, making about a hundred and fifty head. Six years ago there was a good band between Williams and Sunset Pass, but the Navajo Indians got among them and killed all but about thirty head. Between Williams and the Grand Cañon there is a band of about ten and about that number have been seen between Ashfork and Prescott. There are about a dozen not far from Tombstone, but in this bunch the bucks outnumber the does. Arizona does not very fully protect any of her game against miners, and, more especially, against Indians. There are a few grizzlies in a restricted part of Arizona. The antelope, as may be seen from the foregoing figures, ought not any longer to be considered an object of sport.

There are a few elk in the Mogollon Mountains of Arizona, which were imported from Yellowstone Park, about eighty having survived the trip. It is a question whether they will make a good increase, for in all likelihood they will be killed off as rapidly as they multiply.

There are a few mountain sheep in the desert country of California, and in the extreme south of Arizona, and across the line in Mexico. South of Ajo Valley, on the Mexican side, there is some old volcanic country where there are several bands

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of mountain sheep of the desert variety. Not many of these ought to be killed. Since information regarding all these remote districts is so accurate, you can see what sport is today. You can no longer stroll out before breakfast and kill your mutton or your antelope venison.

The great state of California once swarmed with big game. Today deer are almost the only big game you can find. There are a few dwarf elk left in the Coast Range and an attempt has been made to transplant them into the Sierra. The great species of the Roosevelt Elk in Northern California has a few members left. The giant grizzly bear of California, one of the most splendid animals of the world, might as well be called extinct today. There may be two or three grizzlies—perhaps none at all—left in Siskiyou County. Not one has been seen for years. There are a few black bears and some mountain lions in the Sierra, but not enough to invite a big-game trip by an Eastern man.

Colorado is no longer a field for grizzlies; nor are there black bears enough to be worth while, nor elk, nor mountain sheep. Black-tailed deer may be called the one game animal to invite the sportsman into that tremendous mountain region, once one of the most wonderful game districts of the world. Parts of Montana and Wyoming are better, because

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they are close to Yellowstone Park. The country below and west of the park is a good game district even yet in the fall, but the demands on it are extreme.

Suppose we forsake the Rockies, the Sierras, the Cascades, and even the Canadian Rockies and the Selkirks, as game fields today, and pass on to the extreme north, which now is beginning to open up to travel. For two thousand miles north of Edmonton one will be in moose country occasionally—good districts and bad—but one might make a trip there without success, for there is an extreme amount of country and some of it does not abound in game. One must know the district and the seasons for the game. Transportation is meager and outfitting is difficult. The routine trip down the Mackenzie River is not one to invite the big-game hunter. Side trips, which take time, must be made, and for these the fur-trade steamers cannot stop.

On the pass of the Rockies between the mouth of the Mackenzie River and the head of Porcupine River there is a district, very little visited, where there are mountain sheep. It is a two-year proposition to make a good hunt in that region and it is too difficult to warrant the undertaking, though that is one of the least-visited parts of this continent.

At the head of the Black River, one of the Yukon

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tributaries—say, from fifty to seventy-five miles south of Rampart House on the Porcupine—there is good moose country—big moose. Fifty miles north of Rampart House the caribou come in the fall. One cannot very well go into that country and make a hunt and come out the same season unless one could go up the Porcupine in a good power boat from Fort Yukon. There was no such boat there two years ago.

There are a number of streams going down into the Yukon, up which a hunter can go by boat, with the certainty of finding big game if he knows his country and has the time and the money. Toward the headwaters of the Stewart, up the Pelly and its tributaries, more especially round the head of the Macmillan River, there is good big-game country for mountain sheep of two or three varieties, caribou, good moose, and sometimes good grizzlies; but it will surprise you, remote as all this district sounds, to hear that the Macmillan country is often visited, and that some years ago the trappers were supposed to have taken the cream of the grizzly-bear product.

One of the best big-game regions on this continent is around Mount McKinley in Alaska. The hunter can go in via Fairbanks, where he can get outfit and guides. It is not a picnic to make any of these

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Alaska trips, or any of the yet longer ones required for the Northwest Territory, deeper into the continent. One must plan at least six months ahead, for transportation is a desperate thing in that far country.

The Kenai Peninsula, of Alaska, was one of the most splendid game districts of all the world not many years ago. Big-game hunters of all the sporting races of the world went there and shot the country so hard that at length the United States had to put a ban on the export of moose heads and restrict the killing of game very sharply. There is game left in the Kenai country now, but you can no longer call it one of the cinches. The finest moose heads in all the world came out of the Kenai Peninsula—moose that would make the best product of New Brunswick or Ontario look like thirty cents. They also make your pocketbook look like thirty cents today when you go in after them.

Still, you can get good moose in many parts of Alaska, and also the white or Dall's sheep, or the black sheep, known as Stone's sheep, as well as the ordinary Rocky Mountain bighorn. Alaska still may be called a great-game country. The Yukon even yet is a highway into splendid game fields; but every mining camp, such as Dawson, Iditarod, Fairbanks, Ruby City, Circle City—wherever miners go

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—soon becomes simply a center of a shot-out game field. Freight is high in that country; beef is unknown. The big game of the country is used as food, and the market hunters soon clean it out for fifty or a hundred miles around any settlement of consequence; so you cannot go to Alaska now with the certainty of an easy, pleasant, and inexpensive big-game hunt. You must go “a little farther on.” Indeed, all over the world you hear that same old story, “a little farther on”—even in East Africa.

The interior of Alaska is a pleasanter hunting country, though mountainous and difficult, than is the coast country. There is no more difficult or unpleasant hunting country in the world than the coast regions of Alaska, where it rains all the time and where the forests are dense, damp, and nearly impenetrable. In this vast region, along the bold rivers that carry salmon, not only near the mainland but on many of the great islands of the coast, there are still numbers of the great brown bear of Alaska. Up the Stickeen and the Iskoot Rivers you still can get mountain sheep and grizzlies in the wet country. It is a difficult and expensive trip to try to get a good bear, as you may find for yourself.

On Kadiak Island, farther north, the giant bears have been pretty well exterminated, and the great volcanic eruption of a few years ago put them still

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more to the bad. The Alaskan Peninsula, across from Kadiak, was a splendid country for caribou and the giant brown bear until very recently. The volcano did not help any. Those great bears were shot down remorselessly by hunting parties from all over the world. The species is not extinct but it is far more difficult to make a good hunt there now than it was even five years ago.

If you have a private yacht of your own and can afford to go out for a cruise of two or three years along the coast of Alaska, round Dutch Harbor and north of the Aleutian Islands, you can surely get big brown bears—all you want of them. You can even push up far enough north to get a polar bear, which, for the average man, is out of the question unless he has time to take a voyage on a whaler or unless he is located at some point within touch of the Arctic Ocean.

While you are about it, with your private yacht—which, of course, is a mere bagatelle for you and me and others of our best people—you might as well go over to Siberia. In that country you can get, perhaps, one of the great trophies of the world—the mountain tiger of Siberia and upper China. Perhaps you have seen one of those thick-furred robes, beautifully striped and much superior to the tiger of India in beauty. Personally I believe I would as

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lief bag one of those tigers as any other trophy in the world, and I have often planned to make that trip, which ought not to cost more than the mere trifle of ten or twenty thousand dollars.

There are other trophies, however, which in the eye of the big-game sharp outweigh perhaps even the best of the Asiatic tigers. The giant mountain sheep of Tibet, *Ovis poli*, and that other great sheep known as *Ovis ammon*, would rank in the belief of the experts as the capital trophies of all the world. They come just a trifle high. Of course you are now getting into trips—when you mention the polar bear, the moose of the Northwest Territory, and the great trophies of Asia—which mean a year or two devoted to the single purpose of sporting. Usually the boss does not wish to let us off for so long a vacation, and the average salary of fifteen dollars a week, which represents the average income of the average American citizen, does not go so far as it ought when spread out over a proposition of this kind. Big-game hunting today is a question of time and money. Fifteen dollars a week and two weeks' vacation a year do not get us much in the way of sheep and tigers.

Closer at home we still have some countries that, for the boy or young man of today, must fulfill all the feasible dreams of wild life in the wilderness.

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Texas, for instance, was once a wonderful game state; it had buffaloes, antelopes, bears, lions and deer. Today you may say it has deer.

Closer to the north, and yet less known, there lay until within ten or fifteen years ago what I believe to have been the most typical wilderness of the United States—the so-called Delta country of Mississippi. In this dense canebrake and hardwood region there was a country, fifty miles across, where, when I knew it, there was not a house. It was full of black bears, deer, turkeys, and panthers. Today the railroads crisscross it. Its black soil is raising crops. The old bear packs are now scattered. It is an agricultural region today and game is but an incident there. On one hunt there we once killed ten black bears in eight days. If you got one now you would be lucky.

Still, we have left the tracked and tabulated wilderness of Maine, New York, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota—that pinewood country which lies along the south edge of the Great Lakes waterway. This is rather old settled country and, in some part, it has learned the lesson of game supply.

Perhaps you did not know that Connecticut is one of the best deer countries in America—because deer are protected there. Vermont was once shot out, but a few years ago that little state turned out

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eighteen hundred deer killed in one season, more than would have been possible fifteen years before. There is more game in New Brunswick than there was forty years ago. Pennsylvania is something of a bear country yet, and there are very many more bears in Pennsylvania than in Colorado—which perhaps you did not know.

Perhaps you do not know that there are at least as many bears killed east of the Mississippi annually as there are in all the greater country west of it, and more than twice as many deer! You have been thinking of Texas, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado—the Great West—as the place where you were going to make your big-game hunt when you got the price. You can make it with a better prospect of success, albeit in tamer fashion, nearer home. Did you know that?

Yes, it is true that the future of sport is in what we might call the second-growth stage. Perhaps you have seen grandpa's wood lot, with the old hickory stumps standing in it. Here and there are some small trees. Those are the second-growth hickory trees. Our only hope for sport in America, or timber in America, is in this second-growth crop. With incredible speed and with unspeakable remorselessness we have already reached the second-growth crop of practically all raw resources in America.

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Suppose, after having thus casually strolled across the world in pursuit of a big-game trophy, we pass into the South Sea Islands country and stop, say, at New Zealand. It may seem strange to you to hear that in case you really need a good elk head or a specimen of red deer, New Zealand might be the best place for you to go; because, if you are at all posted on your natural history, you will know that there were no land animals at all native to New Zealand, except two species of bats—and bats are not big game, outside Broadway.

In 1862 the gentlemen of New Zealand concluded to see what they could do by way of establishing sport on that continent. At that time they imported red deer from Great Britain. In one district now there are ten thousand of those deer, fine specimens, and a few of them are now allowed to be killed annually. In one district there are said to be forty thousand fallow deer, also the product of a little stock imported from the British Isles. Black-tailed deer and elk, imported from America, are also thriving equally well in New Zealand. In short, New Zealand knew the value of big game; Americans did not.

The rainbow trout was introduced into New Zealand from California in the early eighties, and today New Zealand is the best trout region of all

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the world. The biggest rainbows are no longer to be had in California, Oregon, or Washington; you must go to New Zealand for them. You can get them up to twenty-five, forty, and fifty pounds in New Zealand, with fine sport in bold and rushing rivers which once ran fishless to the sea. In Rotorua Lake, in the Auckland country, an average of four tons of rainbow trout a day has been taken in season. As high as fourteen tons have been taken in one day. There was not a rainbow there in 1880. The problem was perfectly simple when treated on a businesslike basis. Our own problem, also, is perfectly simple if we care to treat it on a business basis.

I have before me, as I write, the report of the gamewarden of California. It is, in large part, a record of what does not exist today but what did exist ten, twenty, or thirty years ago. Yet the warden of that state says, with a certain pride, that the funds raised by shooting and fishing licenses in that state are all applied to game protection. In short, he has the same point of view we have in all our states—that sportsmen only are to pay for sport. Yet we have established as a part of our Constitution, that there shall be no class legislation. Is it not perfectly easy to see the conflict of terms here?

Though it is true that market shooting ought not

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to be tolerated in any corner of the world today—no more than unrestricted killing of poultry ought to be tolerated if there were no systematic increase provided for—none the less, it seems to be the broader and more businesslike point of view to wipe out the whole theory that sport is for sportsmen only, that game is for special classes alone. The truth is, we ought to regard all these great resources of a country as things to be husbanded and increased. We ought not to dig out the roots of the trees in grandfather's wood lot, but give others a chance to grow.

The natural productiveness of the world is as great now as it ever was. Great game will take care of itself now as well as it ever did, and there is still plenty of room. The story of New Zealand is proof of that. On a second-growth basis we can have game all through the United States—all over the world—just as quickly as we want it and will provide for it on a business basis. And there are few better or bigger businesses in which a nation, a state, a county, or a district could be engaged.

Not long ago, at a bankers' banquet in Chicago, attended by gentlemen supposed to be of the highest and best type of citizenship, there were offered on the menu, as one item, Jumbo Snowbirds. These, of course, were nothing but quail, which, knowingly,

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were served illegally at that date—as witness the name under which they were offered; but out of a hundred of those gentlemen, each of whom ate his quail, I did not hear one word of protest or even of comment. This industrial waste was accepted by all those able bankers as a matter of course.

At a banquet a year ago in one of the greatest hotels in Chicago six hundred quail were served, it was alleged, illegally. At that banquet six hundred of the best business men of Chicago sat down. At another banquet in that same hotel, another gathering of good business men, there were five hundred alleged illegal quail served. And yet we ask why our game is disappearing! It is because we are not business men, even when we banquet in that disguise.

Further this deponent saith not. Our own great-game fields lie reaped but not resown. That is waste! That is not being forehanded. That is ruin.

VII

THE WASTEFUL WEST



VII

THE WASTEFUL WEST

ONCE upon a time there was a certain tenderfoot of the city of Philadelphia who made a pilgrimage to Montana for the sake of his health. He thought he had consumption, but it was only pie; so he recovered promptly and in due time returned to the ancestral halls well bronzed and hearty. He brought with him certain heads of wild animals, trophies of his prowess, and withal stories to fit the heads.

“These elk antlers,” he explained, referring to a fine pair of the collection, “are shed every year. They are so large and heavy that you would not think, to look at them, that the animal grows a fresh set every year.” This was the truth, but it was not received as such.

“My son,” said his good old Quaker mother, “I have raised thee to tell the truth, and thee has always been a good boy; but now I plainly see thee is lying to thy old mother. It would be impossible for the elk to raise such horns every year; besides, it would be a waste.”

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True, it would seem a prodigious waste, the waste of Nature with her wild life in America; but America has from the beginning been a land not only of plenty but of waste, of utter, awesome waste in all things. We are rich and careless. So is Nature.

One day not long ago some farmers near Castalia, Ohio, dug into a curious willow-grown mound which had long been known in the little valley of the Castalia trout stream. They found a mass of jumbled elk horns, yards in extent, embracing some scores of horns in all. These had been heaped up and buried there by some earlier men, white or red, and the moisture of their covering had preserved them. By all rights they should have disappeared years ago in the mysterious fashion in which Nature takes care of the shed antlers of all the deer family. Nature is scavenger for her own waste. She sets squirrels and porcupines to gnawing at shed deer horns, sets the elements to dissolving them and the moss and leaves to hiding them, trying to cover up the truth as to her own wastefulness. Otherwise we could walk across the continent today on elk horns.

The average citizen of today, studying the reports of rust on the wheat crop of the West, or the shortage of cotton in the South, does not reflect that a few years ago wild animals roamed where crops now grow. There were elk in the state of Michigan in

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1871, and no doubt later. These animals existed on what is known as the Saginaw "Thumb," on the eastern side of the state. Elk antlers have been dug out of the marsh at the foot of Lake Winnebago, in Wisconsin, though the last elk in Wisconsin was killed about forty years ago—having the hill where the deed was done named after him, by the way. It is hard to believe that during the Civil War there were great herds of elk around Spirit Lake, in northwestern Iowa, and that long after the Civil War farmers chased buffalo in central Minnesota. For that matter there were wild buffalo alive in the Panhandle of Texas the year before the World's Fair at Chicago. Today there is no buffalo range because there are no buffalo. The elk range is restricted to small and lessening areas in the Rocky Mountains—localities of chief interest to pie-sufferers whose physicians prescribe big-game shooting, but who do not know how scarce our big game has become. A man out in Billings, Montana, foreseeing this scarcity, years ago started a corner in elk teeth. He has trunks full of them, strong boxes full of them in safety-deposit vaults in the East. He expects to unload some day before long. Alas, even the Indians, among whom he planned to find many purchasers, have grown forgetful of the old days! Now they will as readily buy a celluloid elk tooth

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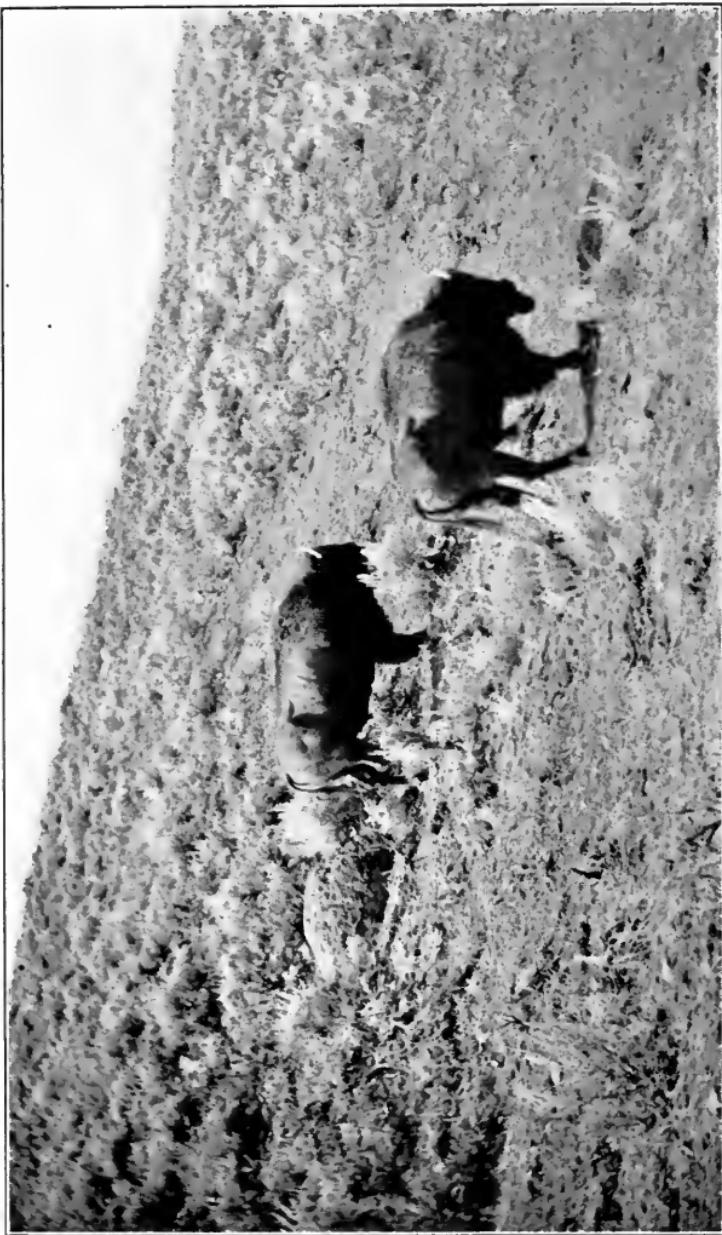
to adorn a beef-hide shirt as the real thing to go on a buckskin bridal robe. As to our big game, we certainly are in other times which bring other customs.

There may be a few European noblemen who still think they can come to America to hunt buffalo and fight Indians, but the American people have long ago forgotten the buffalo. We owed this great creature a better tribute. It was guide and supporter of our fathers in their ways of Western expansion. Once it swarmed in Georgia and the Carolinas, and it was the buffalo and the elk that laid out the first trails to the westward across the Appalachian Divide. The Sioux Indians also used to live in that same country, though not everyone knows that, or even that they later lived in Kentucky, and in Minnesota until the Chippewas drove them westward to the Plains. The first expansionists were perhaps the Sioux, and they followed the buffalo trails to the westward, the same trails later taken by Daniel Boone and his like.

When the settlers reached Kentucky the buffalo began to disappear. They disappeared next from Missouri, though no less a person than Kit Carson hunted buffalo in Missouri, and hunted them with the Sioux Indians at that. But when the Carsons and Boones came to the great river of conquest, the

Photograph by E. Hough.

THE OLD DAYS





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Missouri, the "Big Muddy," they halted at the edge of the buffalo country *par excellence*—that land so long known as the Great West in the minds of the American people. Then ensued the day of the buffalo, a very big one in our national history. We could not have built our railroads without the buffalo, nor have broken into the fastnesses of the American desert with our farms, any more than we could have subjugated our Indians while the buffalo remained.

The buffalo range of the trans-Missouri ran from Mexico far north into the British provinces, and from the Missouri River to the Rocky Mountains—indeed, even across the Rocky Mountains, at the height of the trapping days, when the hunters pressed them too far back into the hills to the westward. They appeared around old Fort Hall, Idaho, before Frémont's time.

As to the total numbers of these great animals, at the time of the first white occupation of the trans-Missouri, there is no such thing as computation. Certainly there were millions, but how many millions one can only guess. The commerce which swept them away left few records to determine its own extent. The period from 1823 to 1883 covers sixty years of slaughter, but the slaughter was not measured or recorded. The commerce of the Santa Fé

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trail depended on the buffalo; indeed, every wagon or pack train which crossed the Plains relied upon the buffalo as a sure source of food en route. White and red man alike depended upon this great animal whose numbers ran everywhere in uncounted thousands. With the white man the buffalo was a convenience; with the Indian it was a necessity. Not even in the scientifically conducted packing industries of today is the last by-product of an animal utilized as it was by the Plains Indians. To them the buffalo gave everything: food, fuel, arms, utensils, clothing, dwelling, ornaments and luxuries—even, at last, surplus currency for the aboriginal bank account. Indeed, the modern packer has all the worst of it in comparison with the Indian. The latter had nothing at all to pay for his cattle, whereas the Beef Trust, amiable and well-meaning as may be its intentions to sweep clear the Western plains at no cost to itself, is still obliged to pay something for its cattle. What an opportunity was lost to the Beef Trust in those old buffalo days! If only it could have run its plants on cattle absolutely free!

As to this last, however, it might have been almost as well for the American people had the Packing Trust been organized earlier. It would have saved millions of tons of good food which went absolutely to waste—a food so abundant and univer-

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sal in its time that Western restaurants were obliged to put up the sign, "No Buff Served Here." The killing off of the buffalo entailed one of the greatest industrial wastes ever known in the history of the world. How many tons of meat were there thus left unutilized? No one can tell. More than two million tons, perhaps twenty million tons—a hundred million. Would that we had it today to feed the starving slum folk fresh from Europe! There is no verification possible in buffalo estimates. The story is commonly accepted that a million hides came down the Missouri River in 1883, the last year of the Northern buffalo herd. These figures are probably too large. One-half or one-third that number would be more accurate, according to fur dealers of that epoch. Yet 1883 was only one year out of more than sixty, and this million hides came from only the upper portion of the range, that along the newly-builded Northern Pacific Railroad. Out of the sixty great years of the buffalo, forty were years of unexampled waste. The famous American historian, Francis Parkman, killed buffalo for no better trophy than their tails, and boasted of it. Later than Parkman came the butchers of the Old World, noblemen who shot without hire and with no purpose save that of killing. These, from the Grand Duke Alexis down, did their share. Army officers

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shot for sport—and sport ends soon where one must stop when a ton of meat falls before one well-placed bullet. The straggling settler on the edge of things kept meat for his winter supply, but he could not help killing “just one more”—and he left it lying where it fell. A man on Plum Creek, near Great Bend, Kansas, long made a living by supplying food to westbound wagon trains—and he sold nothing but buffalo tongues. The rest rotted.

The Indian did not waste; the white man did nothing but waste. The measure of his destruction is colossal. A pile of buffalo bones higher than any house in town and some hundreds of yards in length lay waiting shipment in one Kansas town in the seventies. Out of this one station there was once billed a trainload of cars loaded with sacked tips of buffalo horns alone. This was part, and only part, of the flotsam of the southern range after the skin-hunters had left it. There is no measuring of these figures.

The result of it all was that we took the fight all out of Brother Indian. Left without a living, he became *pacifico*, like prisoners of old Spain, before he became *incommunicado* on the reservations. Then we finished our railroads and followed them with farms, many of which were bought with the price of buffalo hides or buffalo bones.

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Oh, we are civilized, we Americans, and we are rich, rich! Otherwise we could not have afforded all our incredible waste, our incredibly brutal extravagance, our unrighteous haste in squandering our own resources. We are the most reckless people in the world today, no doubt, as we are the richest. Let us not ponder upon the fact that in time the spendthrift goes broke, and that "spendthrift" may be as fair a denomination for a nation as for an individual. Let us forget our excesses as things unpleasant or as things humorous, whichever one likes. We do not mourn about a million dollars—why grieve about a million hides? We do not ponder upon the extinction of the white pine as a forest tree—why trouble ourselves about the wiping out of a race or of a species? We are rich, rich; we can afford it. We can even, in our careless belief, afford to be de-Americanized.

As to the process of our wastefulness in the destruction of the buffalo, there was a curiously systematic organization about it. It was necessary to kill and skin every buffalo on the Western plains at the first possible moment; wherefore, the American mind swiftly reduced it to a science. The markets of the world could use this great shaggy robe—could, to some small extent, use the leather made from the hide. Hence dealers set about the problem

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of merchandizing, taking supply to the demand, and uniting the corners of the world.

Fur traders multiplied in the Middle West. They could pay as much as two dollars for a good robe—at the last of the trade sometimes as much as four dollars, or perhaps eight dollars for a painted Indian robe. There were outfits all over the Plains picking up robes among the Indian villages. There were trading-posts established where the Indians brought their robes. The day was one of waste and ruin and dissolution and destruction. Some of the traders used whisky with the Indians, although this ancient practice of fur traders was not approved of by the new and sober school of commerce which was connected with the robe trade pure and simple. Sometimes a pint of whisky to the head man made his heart good and he told his people to sell their robes. In the earlier times the red men were paid in trade goods on which the trader made his own big profit; but in the railroad days of the buffalo robe trade it was the custom to pay coin to the Indian and trust him to spend it back again at the goods wagon or shopcounter, as the case might be. Sometimes the native hunter got as little as a dollar, or a dollar and a half, for his buffalo robe. Those were easy times. The Indian soon learned that he could make more money by killing more buffalo. In time,

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perhaps, he now and then killed for the hide alone, though he execrated, and abolished as effectually as he could, all the white skin-hunters, as soon as he learned they were killing off the buffalo and taking nothing but the hides.

The Indian robes traded for were, in the earlier days, practically all dressed robes, and the Indian tan was better than any the white man could ever make. The Indian process of tanning consisted of scraping the hide close with one of those absurdly inefficient-looking little bone-handled hoes or scrapers which we see in museums now, then working it hour after hour over a log or beam, or over a twisted sinew rope, the flesh side being covered with clay and grease and buffalo brains. A very large robe was hard to handle in this way, so sometimes the Indian lady operating would split it down the middle of the back and tan the two pieces separately. A great many scientists have been unable to tell the origin of the Indian practice of splitting the buffalo robe and then sewing it together again. The answer was easy to those who knew about it.

Sometimes a hunter, red or white, who was alone and had killed a buffalo, found that the beast had lain down to die with his forelegs doubled back under him, and had not fallen over on his side. This suggested one form of butchering work not unusual

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on the Plains. The hunter, finding the heavy carcass hard for him to handle, made no attempt to remove the skin in the usual way, with the slit down the belly side of the hide. He cut the hide down the back, from neck to tail, and skinning it down on each side, spread it out on the ground, leaving the carcass still sitting up, as it were. Then he cut in along the hump and tenderloin and took out the choice pieces, the "boss" ribs of the hump and the "*dépouille*," and the prized back-fat which any plainsman knew was sweeter than the belly-fats. As he did his dissection he piled the pieces on the spread hide on either side, and so at last he packed his horse with clean meat and went away rejoicing. He left behind him a split robe and the best part of a ton of unused carcass. Perhaps his squaw might come around there another day, but usually it was easier to kill another buffalo.

The Indians sold a certain number of robes to the white traders, even in the days of the arrow and lance, before they were generally supplied with firearms; but all the robes collected by the Indians made rather a small number as against the great total of hides which began to stream eastward, down the rivers and along the railways. It was incumbent upon the white man to get the last robe at the first moment. The result was that highly differentiated

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agency, the skin-hunting outfit, the swift rise and fall of which added at one time a distinctive feature to Western life.

Any man owning a wagon and team might turn skin-hunter, and indeed most of the frontiersmen did so at one time or another up to 1871, on the lower range, and until 1883 in the North. One may have food and some sort of clothing—but what is life without cash? And if cash can be obtained only by the sale of what one has, and if one has only uncounted robes of stupid brute beasts, what is the natural inference and result? Some Western men farmed at the edge of things, but very many went skin-hunting. Sometimes two or three would make up a partnership for the sake of greater safety against the Indians, always bitterest against the white hide-hunters. There might perhaps be two or three wagons, perhaps half a dozen in a big outfit. The wagons had high sideboards and heavy canvas covers, and sometimes there were four horses, or even six if the partnership were opulent.

A rude press, a beam at the tail-gate, was occasionally used in pressing the hide bales, though most of the robe trade was in hides rough-dried and folded only once, lengthwise. This latter method of handling the hide was more common nearer to the railroads. The skin outfit was divided into wagon-

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men, killers, and skinners. Sometimes one hunter would keep them all busy with hides, though two killers were usual; and, indeed, in that time of Western life, hunters were easy to find, for it was the exception to see a man who was not a perfect rifle-shot.

The skinning of the dead buffalo took time, and thirty or forty heads a day was the limit of what the outfit would probably care to kill. The stretching and curing of the hides was slower work, though as to the killing, that might be a matter of but an hour or so. Sometimes it was done at one "stand"—that is to say, in one spot, where the concealed hunter shot time after time into the confused bunch of buffalo, which huddled up and did not dare to run. You cannot see it today, but fifteen or twenty years ago you might have seen it, this record of the killer's work. You may still know districts where the buffalo wallows are not yet all gone; perhaps you know some corner where you can see a verified, genuine buffalo trail, cut deep into the soil; but one does not know where you can find today that other sort of record, the story written in a ring of white skeletons, thirty, forty, or more, all lying on a space not more than an acre in extent.

Suppose you have seen this loose circle of scattered bones marking a "stand" in the old buffalo

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days. Look about and you might see the grass waving on the same ridge behind which the killer lay, perhaps three hundred yards distant. The heavy Sharps rifle—and the hunter would have no other arm in the old days—would shoot in practically the same place with its slug of lead half as long as your finger. The main concern of the hunter was to get the range and to keep out of sight. Yes, no doubt that ridge was where he lay. Farther on, at the first waterhole, perhaps three or four miles away, you may find traces of an old camp, with dried bits of wood, sticklike, scattered about. It was here that the wagon stopped, and these were the pegs used in stretching the hides on the earth to dry. The bone-hunters, who after a time swept off every trace of the slaughter of the buffalo, sometimes left the hide-pegs.

The buffalo-killer, when he set out from camp to locate the herd for the day, took with him his sixteen-pound rifle and his belt full of long, heavy cartridges. Perhaps he hunted on foot altogether, and certainly he must leave his horse behind while at his specific work of shooting. Crawling to the top of some ridge beyond which he heard the low, muttering rumble that told him his game was near, at length he saw his quarry—great shaggy, monstrous brutes, savage-looking as bears yet harmless as

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sheep—feeding or fighting or resting on the grassy flat before him, scores of them—hundreds of them, perhaps.

That sight will be seen no more by any hunter of the world; yet it gave this man no excitement. He only swept out a clean place to lie, bent together a few spears of grass at the crest of the ridge, and placed his cartridge-belt handily before him on the ground. First studying the wind and the distance carefully and noting the trend of the feeding animals, at length he drew out his cleaning-rod and his firing-stick, crossing the two wands together in the grasp of his left hand and resting his heavy rifle in the angle where it would lie motionless. Then he again estimated his distance, perhaps two or three hundred yards or more—as close as he could get without alarming the herd—and fired his first shot, aiming at some cow standing broadside toward him and close toward the front of the feeding portion of the herd. He aimed low, for the heart of the buffalo lies unbelievably low down, close to the shaggy knee of the foreleg which sometimes rubs a little bare place almost directly over the heart. A shot in that region was usually quickly fatal. There must be no flurry or excitement, and the herd must be kept still. “Shucks!” exclaimed the hunter, as he saw the dust cut from the fur fly half-way up

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the side of his game, and knew that he had overestimated his distance. He lowered his sights, and waited for the cow to lie down. She would not get up again but the hunter called this bad shooting. Later victims he might purposely shoot through the lungs, sure that they could not stagger very far.

A part of the herd became uneasy, began to move, to string out. Now the hunter must act at once or be left alone with nothing to show for his morning's work and nothing to keep the skinners busy. Hurriedly he aimed at the leading buffalo of those now on the move. Pictures by artists who never saw the buffalo nearly always show the herd led by some majestic bull. Artists are not even as accurate as scientists. It was always an old cow that led the herd and it was the first care of the killer to learn which cow this was and if possible to shoot her down the first thing. If he failed in this the herd might get out of hand. But he rarely failed if he knew his business. As their leader stumbled to her knees and sank down, the stupid creatures following snuffed and stumbled and began to "mill," moaning, perhaps, and finally standing still, looking at the silent death coming they knew not whence and smiting them down one by one. Be sure that once having his "stand" established, the hunter behind the grass wisp went on with his work as fast as he

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might, cleaning his rifle and shooting steadily. One, two, ten, twenty—his belt was empty at last and the ground in front of him was black.

One is almost tempted to be thankful that the Indians sometimes got him before he got back to camp. Yet he was living according to his lights and according to his environment. Sometimes he went to the legislature or to Congress afterward. There are very many good men in the West, leading men, who were skin-hunters in their time.

Sometimes a Skinner was paid so much a hide for his work, or sometimes he was hired on a time basis, or sometimes all the men were equal partners. Fifty cents a hide was occasionally paid. The camp-cook, after he heard the rifle begin its work a mile or two away, would throw a sheaf of worn I. Wilson butcher-knives before the skinners who grumbly made ready to go at their work. It was monotonous, skinning some millions of buffalo over a thousand miles of country. One genius invented a time-saving device—a long iron picket-pin, which was driven through the jaws of the dead buffalo, fastening the carcass firmly to the ground. Then he loosened the hide around the neck, cut it down the belly, and attached his team of horses to the free edge of the tough neck-skin. Starting up his team, he ripped the entire hide from the body—sometimes.

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Working by day, gambling by night, drinking until the whisky gave out, and grumbling until the load was made for the trip to the railroad town—this was the life of one sort of American citizen at one time in our Western history. Untold numbers of high-topped wagons rolled into these scores of railroad towns, each with its burden of shaggy brown bales, each leaving behind the ghastliness of an unparalleled slaughter and waste of life, and of the means of life, to an appalling total. Those were the days before the cowboy came, but they were wild and hard as any of the wild, hard Western days.

The skin outfit sold its hides for only a fraction of what they were really worth. Then they bought more whisky, drank, fought, made more frontier history, and departed again for the range. The skin-hunter's calling was one easily entered. It invited some good men and a great many bad ones. It was a calling distinct in itself. There were not many skin-hunters who later became bone-gatherers—that was done by another wave of population. Between these skin-hunters and the bone-gatherers came the wolfers—yet another distinct gentry. The carcasses of the buffalo attracted thousands of gray wolves, and the wolfers made a business of poisoning the carcasses—or did so until the wise wolf-beast learned much cunning about traps and poison. Fol-

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lowing the buffalo pelts, there were marketed thousands of wolf robes, not so good as the great robe of the buffalo but serving to mark another swift epoch of the West.

The skin-hunter left his imprint upon the West in habits, customs, even in language. There was long current, west of the Missouri, the slang phrase, "He got a 'stand' on me." Your friend would meet you and say: "I am sorry I am late with my appointment, but I met Jones on the street, and he got a stand on me and told me one of his long-winded stories." The metaphor is obvious, as applied to the buttonholing bore. His victim could not get away. This expression has been little heard for ten or fifteen years in the West, and the inference is that we are now getting too far away from the buffalo days.

Your professional skin-hunter had his own little idiosyncrasies, like any other specialist. The Western cowboy was always particular about his hat, gloves, and saddle, but as to his bed he cared little where or how he slept, and his slicker was often a mattress for him. The skin-hunter cared nothing at all for his garb nor was there any uniformity in it, and he would ride anything at all in the way of a saddle. When it came to sleeping, however, he was a Sybarite. If he had nothing else he was bound

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to have a good bed. The skin-hunter's California blankets would sometimes cost him seventy-five dollars and he would fight before he would lose his bed.

Pat Garrett, once Collector of Customs at El Paso, Texas, and once a protégé of President Roosevelt, was a member of a skin-hunting party on the Staked Plains in his young days, and he tells with amusement how, once upon a time, he and one or two companions left the wagons and went westward on an exploring expedition of their own. When they, or one of them, after some weeks mixed in with Indian fighting, got back to the place where the wagons had been, both wagons and beds were gone.

"Follow them up?" said Pat Garrett. "How could you tell in those days who a skin-hunter was, or where he came from, or where he was going? We just marked the beds off—and mine cost me the best part of a hundred."

What became of the buffalo robes that came in such untold thousands from the Plains? This is a very common question yet there seems no answer for it. Today a good robe is worth what it will bring. There are no quotations; but if you have a robe, keep it. There are very few left among the whites, and among the Indians only a few, preserved as records; for your Indian was fond of inscribing his

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deeds of valor upon the inside of the buffalo robe. The robe has almost disappeared from sight, whether as an article of commerce or of curiosity, and this is true though the skin was tough enough to wear indefinitely. Perhaps our fathers were careless of their buffalo robes, thinking they could easily get others—the old cry of the West and of all America. Today there is a certain value in a whitened buffalo skull, bleached on the Plains. A good trophy head is worth what the purchaser will give—from three hundred to fifteen hundred dollars.

Once upon a time, within memory, there was a Chicago restaurant which advertised buffalo meat. It came from a private herd on the Flathead reservation. There are no restaurants today, West or East, which advertise "No Buff Served Here!" Even in the last days of the buffalo killing there were Ballard rifles and Winchesters on the Plains. Today a Sharps rifle and an oldtime "I. Wilson butcher" are curiosities, and would seem affectations if claimed as personal equipment. Perhaps you once saw your father or your grandfather wear a pair of buffalo mittens, or a rarer pair of buffalo moccasins. You will never see that again.

For a time the shrinking herds of the buffalo found refuges in the Red Desert of Wyoming, the Lost Park of Colorado, the Barren Grounds of the

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Musselshell, in the cow country, but now there is certainly not a head left in any one of those districts. The Cree Indians came down and cleaned out the last of the Musselshell band long years ago. In 1886, 1887, 1888, and 1889 there were a few buffalo left in the Neutral Strip or the Panhandle of Texas, in a very wild and desert country where water is extremely scarce and where it is dangerous for the unskilled hunter to venture. I saw about two hundred and fifty head of buffalo in this country in the year 1886. That was the time of the land boom in Kansas and the advancing settlers soon wiped out the last of these. There are now no wild buffalo in the United States. There are a few, strictly protected, somewhere in the British possessions, indefinitely in the "Peace River District." There are, of course, some few small herds of buffalo owned in different parts of the West, from the Flathead reservation to Texas; and the Yellowstone Park wild herd, small and ill-thriving as it is, is all that remains of the one hundred and twenty-five head which was the limit a good hunter and myself could assign under a fair count in the winter of 1894—when we snowshoed over the entire Park—although everybody then believed there were more than five hundred in the Park.

So now, of course, there is no such thing as a

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buffalo hunt. There was a man of the East—and the impression remains that he came from Philadelphia, too, more is the shame to Philadelphia!—who organized the most peculiar buffalo hunt on record. He bought a buffalo bull of a zoölogical park, had it shipped to him, took it out into the woods back of his house, calmly shot it, and had its head mounted! Even this was almost as exciting as some of the “hunts” for tame buffalo, stories of which now and again come from Oklahoma or one of the Indian reservations of Dakota. There was an automobile taking part in one of the latest of these modern buffalo hunts. We go hunting now for any manner of big game personally conducted by the licensed guide who shows us last year’s elk tracks for our money or tells tales of a buffalo wallow which was once seen on his father’s farm.

Yet all this high-grade, well-systematized butchery in which the Beef Trust did not play a part ended only about twenty years ago. The Indians refuse to believe that it is ended. They pray to their leaders among the white men to take them North, far away, “where the buffalo have gone.” Being told there is no such land they take it out in praying for a hereafter in which there shall be plenty of buffalo. One of these days some of us white Amer-

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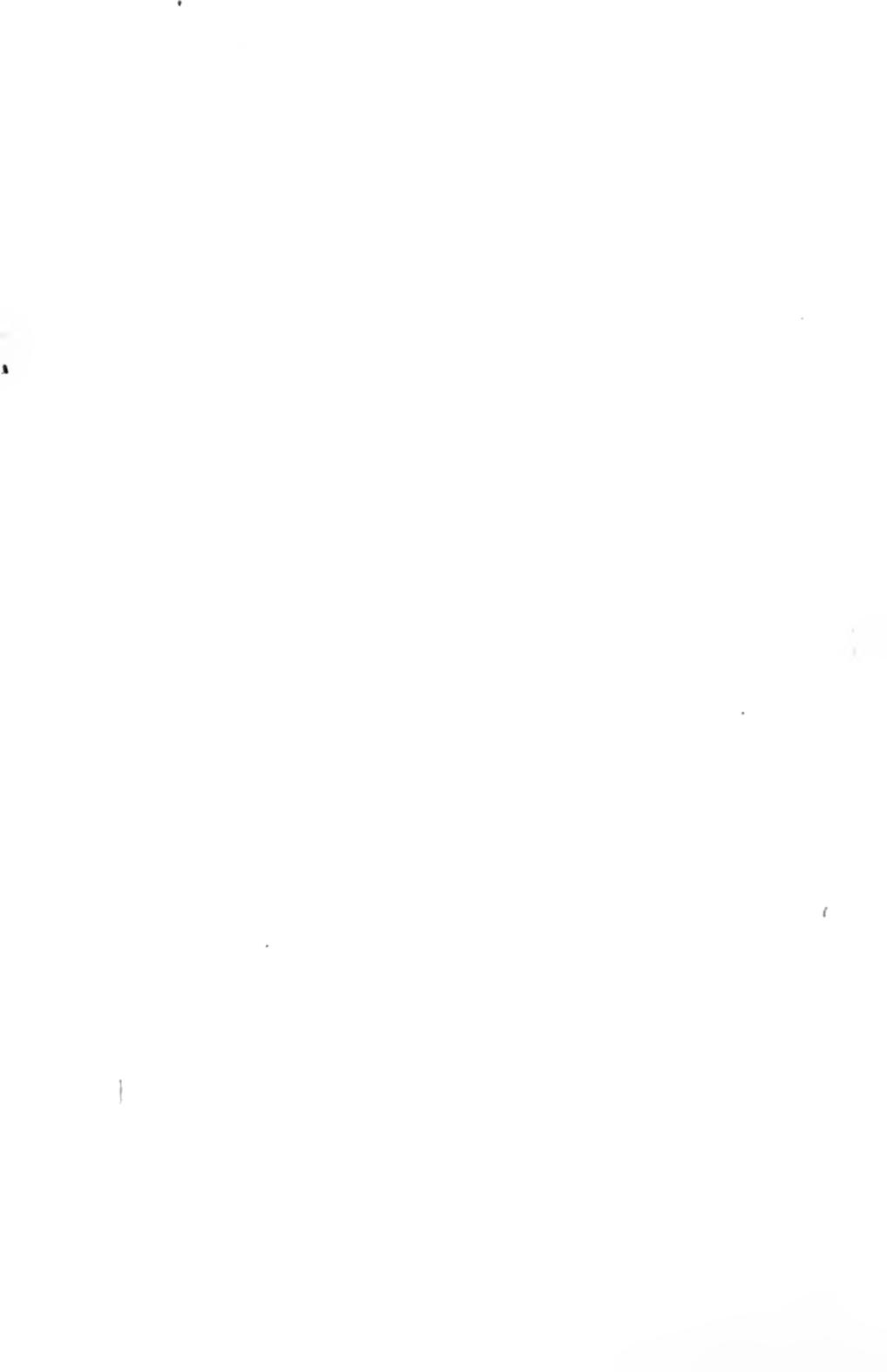
icans may be praying for a square meal of beef once more.

The destruction of the buffalo was the tragedy of the fur trade. It was not so much a blunder in commerce as it was an accident of civilization. The belt of the machinery of progress got loose when the railroads came, and the engine "raced." There was a time of flurry and unpreparedness when our transportation for the first time ran ahead of us. It was the Great Plains railroads that killed off the buffalo.

We wiped the West off the earth, if not off the maps, long ago, and now we seek to water its grave with national irrigation. The terms civilized and savage are, however, but relative, and there is always some sort of balance struck between them. Continually we make war upon the wilderness, its people, its creatures; yet, having done so, we covet again the wilderness, yearn for it, depend upon it, and ape it even in our clothing. We may abolish the wilderness from the earth and from the map, but we cannot abolish it from our blood. It is, therefore, a matter of course after all that, having eaten the heart out of our cake, we shall manage to get along with the fragments left around the edge. We may pay a little more for the fragments than for all the rest, but we can afford it. We are rich, rich!

VIII

RIFLES FOR BIG GAME



VIII

RIFLES FOR BIG GAME

FOR more than a hundred years the old American rifle held its own, the small-bore, muzzle-loading squirrel rifle, with its little round bullet and its heavy, long barrel. Our early frontiersmen managed to kill turkey, bear, deer—even elk and buffalo—with it. With such a rifle the writer's father killed his buffalo on the Platte Valley in 1861. Today we should not feel safe with such a weapon in any country where the chipmunks were in the least disposed to be cross. We should feel pretty much the same way about the old .44 repeating rifle, the first of its kind, which really killed more game than all the rifles ever made since that model came on the market—because game abounded in its day. Times certainly have changed in firearms. It is a long step from the squirrel rifle of Bunker Hill to the 42 centimeter howitzers which did their work across the water.

No doubt you remember reading as a boy the books of the first African big-game hunters—Grant,

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Baker, Speke. Those men used on elephants and buffalo black-powder rifles of four bore or eight bore—small cannons, which were almost the limit in recoil to be sustained by the human shoulder. You could not find one of these guns anywhere in Africa or anywhere else today.

When we came to the American repeating rifle of .45 caliber, which used seventy grains of black powder and five hundred grains of soft lead, everyone thought that the height of rifle development had been attained. Today you would be laughed out of camp if you carried one of those guns, the same sort with which part of our soldiers were armed in the Cuban campaign.

Today the American army has the modern Springfield rifle of the 1906 type, whose Spitzer bullet of .30 caliber has a velocity and accuracy combined which, in the opinion of army men, make this the best military weapon in the world. It is also one of the best big game guns in the world today. Use it with a bullet of one hundred and seventy grains, and it will do business with almost anything up to rhino and elephant or big African buffalo. Indeed, it will kill any of these animals, if rightly handled. With this piece, which your gun-maker can reduce to sporting lines for you for a few dollars, you do not have to bother much about eleva-

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tions up to three hundred yards, as you once needed to when you used the old black-powder Springfield load.

They are working up to great calibers again in European artillery, but in rifles we are working all the time toward smaller calibers for sporting weapons. The rifle velocities of today are something enormous, tremendous, terrific. There has just come out a little .25 caliber American rifle whose muzzle velocity goes over three thousand feet per second. It is but a few years ago that we vaunted our .30 caliber rifles of twenty-three hundred feet velocity; and those same .30 calibers with a bullet weighing two hundred and twenty grains were thought quite sufficient to stop any big game on the American continent—as they are today, for that matter.

For some time one of the most popular African rifles for lighter work has been the .256 in bolt action. That is a mere baby of a gun, smaller even than the old American squirrel rifle. Yet it has killed many elephants, lions, and rhinos, and it is very accurate and useful in open shooting such as they have in hunting the antelopes of Africa. Of course, its killing power depends upon the tremendous velocity of the little bullet. Any good hunter will tell you, however, that this rifle is not to be

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accepted on a paper target basis ; it is accurate, and it will kill if you place the little bullet in the right spot. Placed far from the vital spots on a big game animal, it would be very risky for the user. But at least one woman hunter has been known to kill a full-grown tusker with the .256 ; and the tiny bullet has accounted for numberless specimens of other great game. It is very modern.

The descent to the .256 from the black-powder four bore rifle of early English days in Africa was at first gradual and then very swift. It is easy to recall the report of an American adventurer who, a little over a dozen years ago, came back from Africa and calmly announced that he had been able to kill all the species of African big game with the American repeating rifle of that day. Everyone scoffed at him at first. Since that time the truth of his statement has been proved a hundred times by other Americans. So many of our hunters have demonstrated the .405 repeater, for instance, that there is no longer any question of its efficiency, although many rifles are more accurate than this.

One good hunter of the writer's acquaintance says that should he ever make a second trip to Africa, he would take no other gun but the .405 for any kind of game, and would use the soft point bullets and not the full nickel-jacketed. Everyone to his taste.

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That particular hunter would seem to be entitled to his own taste, for he has very fully demonstrated his own skill and success.

The old English preference in rifles was for large calibers. The American and the German idea of late years has run to the small calibers. The Spitzer ammunition in .30 caliber, as made for the 1906 Springfield, will shoot a great deal better than the average rifleman can hold, at ranges up to three hundred yards; and this sort of ammunition pretty much leaves out of the question the necessity for much study of ranges in actual hunting. In either the bolt action or the finger lever action, that ammunition is plenty good enough for any game on this continent. As a safe rifle for all-round African use it also is good enough, except for the extremely heavy game such as rhino and elephant. This is the belief of experts who have proved the matter out on the field and not on paper—in which latter fashion most rifle problems are worked out.

An English professional ivory hunter who has killed to his own gun four hundred and forty-seven bull elephants, for their ivory alone, has written a book which shows him to be very positive in his notions as to what is safe to bring home the bacon—or the ivory. He says that any modern rifle will kill heavy game sometimes—the .256, the .303, the

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.30, etc.—but that he wants one which will kill any dangerous animal, not occasionally, but every time. For all kinds of game except rhino and elephant, he likes a lead or copper-nosed bullet of three hundred and fifty to four hundred grains and twenty-three hundred feet velocity at the muzzle. It will be seen that he sticks to more lead and less velocity, being, with these figures, from five hundred to seven hundred feet in muzzle velocity behind the top notch of today. His experience is that the heavier bullet expands and uses all its shocking quality in the body of the animal, and does not slip on through. His favorite rifle for this work was a .318, with copper-tipped bullets.

This same hunter worked out to his own satisfaction his ideas of a good elephant gun. He used a single trigger, double-barreled, English express rifle, .577 caliber, with a seven hundred and fifty grain bullet driven by an axite charge equal to 100 grains of cordite. He chose this load after experimenting with others. He tried a .600, with a nine hundred grain bullet, but found that it did not have the penetration of the .577, although the rifle weighed three pounds more. On the other hand he found that the .577 had much greater stopping quality than the .500 or .450; the latter would sometimes do the work, but not invariably. His .577 rifle he had

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made with a twenty-six-inch barrel, which he found long enough; a rifle too long and too heavy is not desirable even when one has a couple of Pullman porters to carry it. In brief, this man's preference, to which he was entitled in view of his long record of success, was the .318 for long range and the .577 for short, close, and dangerous work.

Even with these powerful rifles, one must not under-estimate the need for accuracy on the part of the shooter. To hit an elephant in the brain is something of a trick, even when it is standing still. One aims at the brain "on a line between the eye and the ear" of the elephant, but as the animal sometimes stands eight or nine feet high, obviously the angle to the brain changes in proportion to the distance from the animal itself. If you are close up you must aim below that line between the eye and the ear. If you are farther off—and you must not be so far off that you cannot shoot with exactness—you can aim closer on that line. Miss the brain and you are worse off than if you had not shot.

A friend of mine who has killed his charging elephant says that the animal comes on, not with the trunk rolled up—as usually you see it in the old pictures—but with the trunk extended and moving about. The point of aim for the frontal shot is just at the base of the trunk; but that also must be

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taken on the right line of angle to the brain, else the shot does not stop the animal. Indeed, this is a difficult shot to make successfully.

The heart shot on elephants is easier if one has time and if one can see the body of the animal in the cover. The heart lies rather low, back of the knee, much as it does in the buffalo or the grizzly bear. With a clean, unimpeded shot, the high power rifle will drive the bullet into the heart of an elephant easily enough. The heart is large as a bucket and if you know where it is, and can see the place, and have plenty of time—and a lot of other things—the heart shot is not so bad.

Another African hunter says that if an elephant is going away from you, you can make a spine shot above the hips which often will drop him. This takes a tremendously hard-hitting load, of course. Sometimes the big express will do it.

Yet another African hunter says that he has often put elephants hors du combat by the simple process of shooting them in the knee joint; the modern high power rifle bursts open the joint and the animal drops. It cannot then arise and may be dispatched later at one's leisure. I have never heard of any other hunters who have tried this shot deliberately. This same man declares that if you stand in the face of a charging elephant and keep on firing at

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him, he will certainly turn. Yet another hunter says that it is not difficult to sidestep the charge of a rhinoceros, if you have nerve enough to wait until it is close before you step aside. In any case these great animals, in shape and size, are something like a street car. One fancies that the theory of plenty of lead and plenty of powder would be more comforting at such a moment.

The keen hitting, small-bore arm is for the deliberate shot or the long range shot. Between shooting at a standing animal and a charging animal there is all the difference between shooting ducks over decoys and quail springing in cover; one is aiming work and the other is snapshooting.

For our American big game we do not need so much shocking power but must have range and accuracy; therefore, the small-bore modern weapon may be called correct for our country today. It is sometimes necessary to kill mountain sheep at ranges of two hundred yards or over—although very often you will get shots at seventy-five or one hundred yards in actual hunting experience—and it is better to get too close than to open up your battery while your game is two or three hundred yards away. Today the proposition of hitting your game when you have found it is far simpler than it was in the old black-powder, heavy bullet days,

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when we had to be careful in the estimate of the ranges. The old Springfield load, for instance, had a trajectory which would not injure a church steeple at five hundred yards, although if you managed to plump your big bullet on a running animal the latter was pretty safe to stop.

One ought never to go hunting for rare and difficult game, or for dangerous game, without having absolute confidence in the particular rifle which he is using. He ought neither to change his footwear nor his gun just at the time he needs the most comfort and most confidence.

It is a good thing to have all of one's rifles fitted with shotgun stocks, so that instinctively one shoots fairly close, at least, to the mark. The cheek-piece is by no means a bad thing on the rifle stock, although most Americans sneer at this as a European notion. It is just as well to give yourself every per cent of advantage at a time when one shot means so much to you, and the cheek-piece aids in quick, perfect alignment.

Especially necessary, of course, to give the rifleman confidence in his rifle is thorough acquaintance and practice with the rifle sights. Do not begin monkeying with your sights after you get on the game field; know your rifle before you go to testing it at the last instant.

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Most of the American made rifles which you get will shoot too high for you. The reason for this is that these guns are sighted at the factory by a man who holds the tip of the front sight just below the edge of the bull's-eye at which he aims. The expert will tell you that in this way he gets a clearer and more exact vision; the front sight is not lost indefinitely in the black of the bull's-eye. Yet it is easy to see that this man is hitting higher than he is aiming all the time. That is to say, his rifle is shooting high for you.

In actual practice on game, you do not want to stop to allow for anything, or to hold below or above where you want to hit. The instinct for your eye is to hold your front sight exactly where you want to hit, and your rifle, to be practical, ought to be arranged for that purpose. That was the way the old squirrel rifle was sighted. It had no provision whatever for changing the elevation. The rear sight was a small, flat bar with a notch in it. That and the small, low-lying front sight made all the machinery there was about it, and with this machinery men managed to kill game. That theory today is the correct one for actual field work, and it is just as well, if you want to get absolute confidence in your rifle, to work to something of that theory. There is a vast difference between bull's-eyes on the

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target range and bulls on the hoof. It is the latter with which you are more especially engaged. Do not pay too much attention to the frequently paid writing of "experts," who often praise under cover.

There are a great many rifle sights on the market, all intended to make rifle shooting easy for the novice or for the man who does not get out very often in the open. None of these sights will, of itself, make a good rifle shot out of you. You must have practice to get confidence in your weapon and in your sights. But if there exists in your case some physical impediment, some peculiarity of the eyes, then practice will do you no good. You must, therefore, determine whether your eyes qualify you among the users of the open-sight rifle, or among those who by reason of astigmatism or other faulty vision, or because of old eyes, must be obliged to use some kind of peep sight or aperture sight.

It is conservative advice to you—and very safe advice in these days of flat trajectories—to stick as long as you can to the open-sight school. On the rifle range we have time for theories, but on the game range we do not. We still have the instinct to shoot quickly and to shoot directly at the spot we want to hit. The game animal is not going to stand and wait. The old school of open-sight riflemen did not change the rear sight very much; they simply

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drew a little fine or a little coarse with the front sight, and the look of the front sight was the determining factor in making the shot.

There is one great thing to be said in favor of the open sight, which often is lost sight of by the theoretical writer on rifle shooting, and that is the "illumination," the distinctness with which the sights can be seen. In a dark wood, or on a dark day, or in a snowstorm or rainstorm, you cannot see so clearly through the average aperture sights as you can through the average open sights. For all purposes, therefore, the latter are more apt to be ready for instant work on a fairly efficient hunting basis. If, therefore, you can still shoot the open sights, and if you have your sights adjusted not to hit four or five inches above where you are holding but to hit directly where you hold with a fair, fine sight, you will have worked out a system which, in all likelihood, will hang up meat in your camp.

But suppose you are something of a theorist, or suppose you are something of an old man, which is more to the point, and that for you the open sights begin to look a little woolly around the edges. There remains for you the refuge of certain scientific optical principles. In reality the most accurate shooting you can do will be through some sort of aperture sight. Thus you will get a long sighting base—

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that is to say your sights will be a long way apart, as your eye is close to the rear sight—so that your actual practice may be more accurate than it is apt to be with the open sights. The drawbacks are two: you will lack illumination, and you will have difficulty should you find that you need to readjust your range. In the latter case you cannot just draw coarser with the front sight; you will have to hold your whole system of sighting at a point above the place where you want to hit on the animal. If you are a man of the old open-sight school, this may cost you a head of game or two. It may confuse you and make you irritable for a time. Your theorist—or your man who has grown accustomed to this style of sighting on a rifle—will laugh at you and tell you it is all your own fault. This latter is true, though not comforting.

The great argument in favor of the old open sights is the argument in favor of all fool-proof devices. The gun always ready to go off and always safe to shoot with a certain per cent of accuracy is the one which will do the most good for the most men. Finesse in trajectory and sights is something for those more concerned with writing than with shooting. If your desire is not to be a faddist, or even not to be so much an expert shot as an efficient gentleman-sportsman in the field, you will per-

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haps do better to consult with some practical hunter who has established his own right to be heard, rather than to consult the theorist or those who have worked things out academically on paper, and not on the hoof. No matter which school you shall elect to join, whether from choice or from necessity, you will find plenty of weapons today which will shoot better than you can—weapons too good and too destructive, when it comes to that—too certain, too accurate for the good of the game supply.

There is one system of sighting, known as the V M system, which uses the aperture idea on both rear and front sights. The front sight, instead of being a bead or knife edge or a dot, is simply a little ring. All aperture sights—of which this is the latest development—rest upon the optical fact that when the eye is looking through any small circle or hole, it unconsciously looks through the center of that hole. When you first begin to use rather large aperture sights you see all the outdoors, and it does not seem to you that you can by any possibility be accurate; but when you look through the center of that hole—and you do—you unconsciously, without mental effort at all, are running a straight line from your eye to the point you want to hit, and there is no rim of metal between to blur or bother you.

The only restriction of this or any other system

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of aperture sights lies in the fact that they seem to imply a certain range, a certain light, stable conditions. Now the actual hunting conditions are not so stable. A mountain sheep is not going to wait long for any theory of yours. If you know the range and if your aperture sight is of exactly the elevation to hit just where your eye looks through the center of your sight, then you get your sheep. It is up to you to care for that.

Hundreds of heads of big game are killed annually with aperture sights. Also hundreds of heads are missed, both with aperture sights and open sights. In your own case, simply use the sights in which you have the most confidence, and use them on a rifle with which instinctively and unconsciously you can shoot pretty much to the right spot quickly and promptly. In other words, let your system for rare game or dangerous game be as nearly fool-proof as possible. It is always at just the wrong time that theorists get balled up. Work out your own theory and put it into practice so regularly that it ceases to be a theory but remains only certainty and confidence on your part—a system that works automatically, like the steering wheel on your motor car.

Most of us use our rifles for nothing more dangerous than deer. How should the hunting rifle of

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the American sportsman be sighted for use in this country? Certainly you do not now need to have any very elaborate rear sight provisions for elevation. The buffaloes and antelopes of the plains are gone. Such game as you will find in ordinary hunting conditions will rarely ever be shot at over two hundred yards.

For the average American hunting rifle, therefore, two small leaf rear sights will be enough. One will do for close range, the other for mid-range work. Say that you set your first leaf so that it will shoot on the dot at seventy-five yards. You will find that this means, with the average high-power rifle, that there is scarcely any appreciable variation at any range inside of seventy-five yards.

Suppose, for instance, that a bear is charging and that you are shooting at him at a distance of twenty or thirty yards. Certainly you do not want to shoot over his head, and certainly you do not want to be stopping to change your sights at that time. Now if you know you are using the lower leaf, you can be sure that the seventy-five-yard sight will cover correctly all these close inside shots.

Again, if you have not estimated your distance correctly, your seventy-five-yard shot will still keep you within the killing circle up to double that distance. If an animal begins to look too far away—

and it may be one hundred and fifty or three hundred yards, though very possibly you did not estimate the distance correctly—the second leaf, sighted at, say, one hundred and fifty yards, will account for a hit at any actual range of one hundred and fifty up to two hundred yards, or perhaps two hundred and fifty.

In other words, these two sighting ranges of seventy-five and one hundred and fifty yards will give you hits in practical hunting conditions. This is a very fool-proof system, and to repeat, only fool-proof systems are of much use in the field.

As a matter of fact you do not kill very many deer at a range much over one hundred and fifty yards. If Grandpa could take his old squirrel rifle with no fancy sights on it at all and no chance to change the elevation of the rear sight, you could, in a pinch, take your modern small-bore, high-power rifle, with its tremendous velocity and its flat trajectory, and kill game with it, if it had only the sort of sights that Grandpa used. That would not be a bad fool-proof system even today. We are rather running wild on theory nowadays; in short, we have far more theory than we have game.

A successful big game hunter of the writer's acquaintance, who once was charged by a grizzly bear which he killed at twenty-five yards, says that in

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sighting his rifles he always trains them to hit a spot the size of a quarter regularly at not over twenty-five yards. You see, he is all the time thinking of being charged by a grizzly bear, which may not happen to him again in a thousand years. This rifleman "holds for the shot" at longer ranges. That is to say, his sighting unit is established closer in than the seventy-five yard range, which has been recommended above for the average man. It is a system which works with him and perhaps it may work with you. But whatever your system, learn it and stick to it, so that in the field your confidence in your rifle is absolute. Get fool-proof as much as you can. Don't monkey; don't change; don't fritter.

What battery should you take to Africa, if you were going on a big game hunt? I have asked that question of a number of my friends who have hunted in that country. One, as I have stated above, said that he would not be afraid to confine his equipment to one .405 American repeater, ammunition all soft-nosed. Ninety per cent of those interrogated have said that they would by all means have a heavy double express rifle for close and dangerous work. I think I should want the latter gun in my own case. For all game except the extremely heavy game such as elephant, rhino, and buffalo, there is

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probably no better sporting rifle made today than our Springfield army weapon, restocked for practical sporting purposes. For the average man one modern Springfield and one double express would be African battery enough. At the extreme limit these two guns, with the addition of a .405, would be all the equipment one would need.

The guns of Speke and Grant and Baker—all those old chaps who used to raise our hair in horror when we were boys—are in the discard now. Before you undertake to rival their feats, learn the general proposition that you must be cool at the test and that you must have confidence in your gun—must know what it and yourself will do. In these present days of almost perfect firearms it is a good deal safer to bet on what the gun will do than on what its owner will in actual big game conditions. The best combination for either factor, or for both, is that which most closely approximates fool-proofness.

IX

WEALTH ON WINGS

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WHEN the fathers of our country framed the Articles of Confederation, and afterward the Constitution of the United States, they suffered under the embarrassment of not knowing what was going to happen in the future; an embarrassment we share today. Casting about for some scheme which would give every man a show for his white alley, they hit on the idea that in union there is strength—but that there ought not to be too much strength in the union.

The war between state rights and centralized government began then and has never yet ended. There is considerable geography in the United States—enough to furnish different environments, and different environments sometimes have led to different interests and different opinions.

In general terms our central government, rather than our state governments, stands for the look ahead and for conservation, whereas state rights and personal liberty concern themselves rather with

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the present day and selfishly profitable affairs. At times it has taken our best statesmen to reconcile our twofold form of government with conditions its original framers could not have foretold. One of the best compromises we have yet devised is the interstate commerce idea.

Somewhat crude and clumsy, this measure means well for the American people, and—sometimes at least—it stands for the look ahead and for fair play. Some curious applications of the general interstate idea have been made. From the Standard Oil Case to the Mann Act, it has been used as the vehicle for carrying across state lines the nation's notions as to fair play, morality and sanity. It has done much toward safeguarding the property of all the people.

As to the natural wealth of this country, there was never another that had its like given it from the hand of Nature. Wealth of all sorts is or was ours—of the forest, the mine, the soil, the waters and even of the air. Most of this raw wealth was handled under local or state legislation because it was localized itself. Other items of that wealth, however, could not be localized, but crossed from state to state.

It took us all the time from the Articles of Confederation to the year 1913 to grow wise enough to

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apply to this interstate wealth the doctrine of interstate commerce. Meantime the wealth itself had well-nigh disappeared.

The wild game of America helped to settle America. In the times when it was hardest for a frontiersman to make a living, the wild game helped him out. The rifle went with ax and plow across this continent, and it was the rifle that helped the ax and plow in the earlier days of adversity. At first the Americans valued only the large game; but in time they began to use wildfowl as food, then as a means of sport. Later they began to use them as articles of commerce.

For two entire generations we have sought to put over on the American public the impossible doctrine that a man can reap indefinitely without sowing at all. We treated our wildfowl as we would a mine, not as we would a farm; on the basis of amortization and not of renewal. The man in the city felt that he was an American citizen, and had as good a right as anyone to eat wildfowl if he had the price to pay for it.

There sprang up a large class of professional gamekillers who encouraged him in that belief. They kept on reaping, but no one sowed. We did our best to increase our poultry supply, our supply of beef and mutton and pork; but, even when we did

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our best at such increase, we saw the cost of all these items go up with great rapidity.

What, then, could be expected of a commodity which was treated not as a domestic article of trade but on the basis of a mine—to be used until exhausted? We treated our wildfowl as a mine. We applied state rights to this wealth, which beyond all other commodities was itself inherently and fundamentally interstate wealth.

We framed a multitude of state laws, based on local whims, local ignorance and local selfishness, with no uniformity even as between states in practically the same geographical situation. We followed out our ancient right of personal privilege, until we faced game fields suddenly gone barren. For half a generation thinking men have known that the game of America was doomed.

It was not until some few years ago that John F. Lacey, a congressman from Iowa, conceived the idea that game shipped across the state line became subject to the watchful care of the nation itself. The Lacey Act may be called the first step toward national intelligence in the preservation of our wild game. Of course, its effect was for the good not only of wildfowl but of upland or localized game.

The Lacey Act did not prevent the marketing of many thousands of tons of wild game, shipped le-

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gally or illegally; but it did prevent the marketing of yet other thousands of tons which otherwise would have been killed and shipped. It recognized the old doctrine of the common law, that wild game belonged to the man who reduced it to possession; but it recognized also the right of the several states, under their police power, to regulate the killing and shipping of the game, and the accepted doctrine that ownership of game rested in the state.

This was as far as we had gotten under our old, absurd, gamewarden system. The Lacey Act went a step further. It took advantage of this very confusion and lack of uniformity in state laws and forbade the handling in one state of game illegally killed in another. It was a clever use of the blanket utility of the interstate commerce idea.

Still our game decreased, upland birds and wildfowl as well. Under our system of state license we Americans raised nearly two million dollars a year, ostensibly to protect our game. We protected our politicians instead. It became obvious that a few more years would see our upland game wiped out and wildfowl shooting pretty much a thing of the past.

It became evident that, even yet, some means must be found by which the wisdom of the nation could protect the American people against the folly

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of the states—that is to say, against their own individual and selfish personal folly. We had nothing except the Lacey Act that could be called a national game law. So we resorted once more to the involutions of the Interstate Commerce Law. Congress passed the so-called Weeks-McLean Law, the simplest and most obvious national measure that could well be devised. It sidestepped the whole proposition of state rights and personal liberty, and addressed itself to the preservation of the commodity that beyond all others is interstate—essentially and irrevocably such.

This act of Congress did not undertake to cross state lines and tell how the local or upland game should be protected; but, taking this broad country just as the wildfowl themselves take it, without any visible state lines, it undertook to protect our migratory birds.

This law passed over to the Department of Agriculture the regulation of the use of that form of our natural resources which is transient and migratory. We do not really own that wealth, even as a nation. It is raised in these days almost wholly outside our national confines. Canada raises most of the wildfowl we kill today, and in return we not only give Canada no reciprocity, but, on the other hand, for generations we have done all we could to

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lessen the supply which might be called lent to us by the Northern breeding grounds of the American wildfowl.

At no time in the history of our country, even before our own better breeding grounds were wiped out, did we ever have many wildfowl which hatched in our country and afterward passed north to Canada. Young wildfowl hatched in the Dakotas or Minnesota went south, but came back the following spring to their own habitat. The Weeks-McLean Law is the first American game law that has ever given Canada a square deal. Only the narrowest of selfishness can fail to see that in giving Canada this square deal we help not only Canada but both Canada and ourselves, since we are simply giving up our old foolish doctrine that you can continually reap and never sow. The great sowing grounds to-day lie in Canada.

Before the passage of this national measure we had been doing the best we knew how to save some of our migratory birds, whether by state or national laws. We have established within the last few years forty-six national bird refuges. From time to time in the past, large private estates have been made game refuges or shooting preserves; but you can measure within the span of the past few years the first American movement toward a private game

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refuge. That was something entirely new in America.

All these northbound fowl, however, going north under the general wisdom of the proposition that if you reap you must sow, reach Canada today less such numbers as are killed in the spring shooting of the United States. Our state laws began to restrict the sale of game very sharply; but it was realized that the next great agency of destruction was the spring shooting. We could never get at that—could not even get state laws enacted to abolish it, weak as state laws always have proved themselves.

It was then that there came this simple and obvious Weeks-McLean Law, which solved at one stroke this whole vexing problem which had been left unsettled for a generation. In combination with all these other gradually stiffening measures of protection, it gave the people of America for the first time reason to believe that we are to have a reign of law more compatible with our intelligence as a people.

Let us not use the much-bandied name of conservation but just call this an example of good horse sense. It gives his equity in the game to the man who has time to shoot and to the man in the city who has not time to shoot but who, none the less, has a right to his undivided interest, his share in the



CANVASBACK, REDHEADS, AND GREATER SCAUP DUCKS

Photograph by Francis Harper.

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surplus, his interest in the good-will of this going institution. It is fair all round and equally fair for all.

The framers of shooting regulations under this law hit on the same geographical differences which, before now, have made trouble under our twofold form of government. They made their compromise, oddly enough, practically along what we might call the Mason and Dixon Line, and divided the country into two zones, practically along the latitude of the Ohio River, naming the group of the northern zone by states and that of the southern zone in the same way.

In broad simplicity the dates for killing wildfowl were made the same for all the states in the northern zone; and a different date, uniform for all states in the southern zone, was established, in view of the fact that migratory birds advance southward somewhat with the season. For instance, after the birds have left Illinois altogether they may be most abundant in southern Texas. The harvesting date would not be the same in both sections. So, following a broad common sense which looked toward the wiping out of a number of confusing local dates, the National Government put its hand to a sort of Missouri Compromise which is very apt to stick.

Perhaps many of the men who actually voted for

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this bill in Congress did not know how hard a fight had been waged by a few public-spirited men in the cause of game protection in this country. Not all of these men were sportsmen. I see no reason for setting the sportsman apart in a class, or regarding him as a sacred object individually entitled to more benefits than anyone else. The weakest part in many state laws was that they had this touch of class legislation in them—or, at least, the sportsmen often sought to put it there. Our whole theory of game laws was childish; it sought to eat the cake and yet have it, meantime keeping the other fellow from getting any cake.

It was by no means sportsmen alone who passed the Weeks-McLean Law or built the sentiment that made it possible. Sportsmen did their share in proportion as they were broad-minded and not selfish. As a matter of fact, some of the wealthy shooting clubs located in the migratory flyway of the wild-fowl, clubs whose members may be called sportsmen, have been most prominent in antagonizing the regulations of the Department of Agriculture in so far as they prohibit spring shooting of wildfowl.

We do not need to classify ourselves either as being or not being sportsmen in our handling of this question. It is simply one of wisdom in taking care of a part of the wealth of the people at large.

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Every man is interested in that, whether or not he owns a gun or has time to use it.

At one time we raised a great many wildfowl within our own national confines. Most of these were bred along a north and south line passing through what we call the states of the Middle West. The Atlantic States had splendid shooting for generations, but the birds of Currituck and Chesapeake were bred either north of our northern boundary line or in grounds very close below it. As a matter of fact the scoters—known as seaducks along the Atlantic coast—fly for thousands of miles due south-east from the regions where they breed.

The line of flight of the canvasbacks and red-heads has in it less latitude and more longitude; it is flatter, and more to the east than the southeast. These birds formerly bred in great numbers in the Dakotas, Minnesota, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba. They hang round the wild-celery lakes, even in their migrations; and, having learned where abundance of wild celery was to be had on the Atlantic coast, they set up their ancient trading line between these breeding and feeding grounds until they were shot out on both.

The main breeding grounds for all the wildfowl of the country have always been in the central or western part of this continent—say, from Mason

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and Dixon's Line north to the Arctic Ocean. Wood ducks and most of the marsh ducks formerly bred in large numbers in Illinois, Indiana and Iowa. Few breed there now. Wild geese formerly bred in Iowa. Perhaps none has been known to do so in any recent year. Minnesota furnished large areas of country suitable for nesting grounds, and the Dakotas still larger. A certain number of local birds, as they are known, are reared there every year even yet; but only a fraction of the earlier numbers.

The railroad has been the great enemy of migratory fowl. Our transcontinental lines did their share; and when the Canadian Pacific Railroad passed westward it opened up to settlement and to shooting enormous areas of the very finest of the breeding grounds of this entire continent—much better than those Arctic or sub-Arctic regions which vaguely we have always thought to be the inexhaustible source of our wildfowl.

When these railroads went into Saskatchewan and Alberta—the Canadian Pacific, the Canadian Northern, the Grand Trunk Pacific, with their transcontinental lines, their north-and-south feeders, and their recent extensions into the late wilderness of the Peace River country—we Americans did not repine, but exulted; and we went on with our old theory that in order to get shooting all you had to

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do was to go West. We went over into Canada—those who could afford it—and we shot very blissfully for a decade or two, after seeing the game decrease in Minnesota and the Dakotas.

For a long time we had fine goose shooting in Canada on the stubbles—a sport that once flourished in the Dakotas, but is now not known there in its earlier excellence. Then the word was passed that the geese had “changed their line of flight” and that it was hard to get any of the old stubble shooting. Saskatchewan went on marketing her game with certain restrictions. Then, little by little, even in Canada—and that in those portions of Canada which are the very best of all the breeding grounds on the whole continent—word was passed that the ducks were not quite so abundant as they ought to be, for some reason or other. Perhaps their line of flight also had changed!

We did not pay much attention to the general question of the wildfowl supply even then. Those of us who could afford it went down to the Gulf coast in the winter-time and shot in Louisiana or Texas. We sent back word that there were just as many ducks as ever—because, fatuously, we saw gathered there in the sharply restricted winter feeding grounds all the output of the sharply restricted summer breeding grounds. It is just as if there

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should be a big corn crop in Iowa, and little or no crop in any other state of the West; and as if we should stand in the middle of that corn crop and say there was just as much corn as there ever was. You would not think that human beings could be so foolish; but we were just as foolish as that.

We never took into consideration the scarcity of birds elsewhere, and we never investigated the enormous lessening of the best breeding grounds of this continent. The more intelligent of us perhaps, if pressed too hard on the question, would have said:

“Pshaw! What is the use worrying about it? There are millions of acres of breeding grounds in Northern Canada, in the Arctic wilderness, where no one will ever bother the birds.”

It is in regard to this latter supposition, and because of it, that the writer wishes to offer this study of the wildfowl supply of the American continent. Now it is not true that we shall ever again have in the Far North, or anywhere else, as good breeding grounds as those which have largely been wiped out just south of and just north of the dividing line between this country and Canada; that was the best nesting ground on this continent and we have nothing to take its place. I say this after a journey from the American line to the Arctic Ocean, along the natural flyway of our wildfowl, which follows

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the Mississippi Valley in this country in large part, and in large part the Athabasca-Mackenzie River valley in the Dominion of Canada. By the latter valley I mean the waterway of the Athabasca, Slave, and Mackenzie rivers, with their adjacent lakes and streams.

Very happily for us all there are breeding grounds in that Far-Northern country where the railroad never will go; but even this statement should be made carefully. One of the greatest wildfowl regions of that northern country is in the Peace River delta and round Lake Athabasca, about four hundred and fifty miles north of Edmonton, Alberta. Especially is the fall goose shooting in that country —on white geese or wavies—superlatively good, though these birds do not nest there. But when we reflect that within two or three years there may be a railroad built to MacMurray, which will bring the traveler within less than two hundred miles of steamboat transport to Lake Athabasca, at Fort Chippewyan, we begin to see that we ought not to prophesy too sweepingly regarding the eternal isolation of this breeding ground.

Again, the southern and western shores of Hudson's Bay proper have been fine nesting grounds for numbers of geese and different species of ducks which come into our country in the fall. You would

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not think these in much danger from the sportsman tourist, did you not stop to think that they are building a railroad to the western shore of Hudson Bay.

Do not be too sure that even this country will always remain isolated and unmolested. The line of perpetual safety must be placed much more than five hundred miles north of Edmonton; and Edmonton is a considerable distance north of our northern boundary.

There remain the big breeding grounds more or less vaguely supposed to exist toward the mouth of the Mackenzie River. Here, to be sure, latitude and geography conspire against the sportsman tourist. If he remained in that country long enough to get good shooting in the late summer he might not get out that winter. The wildfowl come south far faster than steamboats or scows on the tracking line. But that breeding ground is far more restricted and less prolific than it is generally supposed to be.

Another great northern breeding ground we have been accustomed to locate vaguely on the Yukon River. Toward the mouth of that river, just as in the delta of the Mackenzie River, there are good wildfowl nesting grounds; but neither of these rivers is a continuous nesting ground for wildfowl.

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The greater portion of the shores of the thousand miles of these great waterways is, on the contrary, entirely unsuited as breeding grounds for wildfowl. These birds must have low and marshy country, and not rocky shores or vast flats covered with interminable growths of spruce and cottonwood and willows.

The truth is—or the truth as I conceive it to be after a journey to the mouth of the Mackenzie, thence west to the Yukon, and south to the Pacific Ocean—that only a relatively very small portion of that great wilderness country is suitable for raising wildfowl. I do not believe the percentage of such acreage is anywhere near so large—perhaps it is not one-fifth or one-tenth as large—as the percentage of acreage naturally found in the Dakotas, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

Certainly, though the season was at that time better advanced so that the young birds began to show, I saw more ducks in the ponds along the Canadian Pacific Railroad in three days in August than I had seen in three months in all that Far-Northern country. I do not offer this as a conclusive argument at all, but as a phenomenon easily explained; yet nothing on my entire northern trip was more disappointing than this conclusion, that we all had been overestimating the extent and productiveness of these vaguely located northern breeding grounds.

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Even on the great marshes round Lake Athabasca we saw very few ducks. This was very largely because the young birds were still in the grass and not yet flying; but we talked with the Indians and halfbreeds round Chippewyan and they all said the birds were not so numerous as formerly. They apply this statement also to birds bred north of there.

To be sure, old Peter Loutit, the champion goose-killer of Chippewyan, killed eight hundred and fifty white geese on his hunt last fall, putting them up for winter meat; but Peter has shot for years in this locality and he says the geese are by no means so abundant as they used to be.

It was one of my purposes in making this trip down the Mackenzie River to get some information on these very questions; so I made careful inquiry of all available sources of information at all the northern posts where we stopped in our journey of two thousand miles north of Edmonton, to the Arctic Ocean. The traders, the white residents, the Indians, and the halfbreeds all agreed, whenever asked the question, that both ducks and geese seem to be passing away.

This information, the accuracy and general applicability of which could not be doubted, came in very disconcerting fashion. Like everyone else I

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had thought that all the ducks and geese had to do was to go up north somewhere and lay eggs for you and me. They are doing nothing of the kind up there, compared with their former performances.

Now those people up north, a great many of them, never heard of Texas or Louisiana and would not be able to tell where the Gulf of Mexico is. They do not know anything about the number of birds we shoot. All they know is that they do not have so many birds as they formerly did.

Without a doubt or question we have killed their birds; they have not killed ours. Our winter shooting, our spring shooting, our market shooting—those are the things which have cut down the natural food of many an Indian village in the Far North.

One of our favorite assertions, used to justify us in shooting when and how we like, was the old myth that the Indians destroy the ducks up north by gathering their eggs. They do gather a few ducks' eggs, it is true, and they are not very particular about the freshness of them; but there is no regular or steady industry in that line, and the eggs are not regarded as a regular form of food but an incidental item.

An Indian is very lazy. If he can get anything to eat round the post, or if his nets are bringing him

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in fish, he is not going to bother to tramp round a marsh hunting for ducks' eggs; and ducks do not there, any more than with us, make their nests in the dooryard. The great support of the Indians of the north is fish; they take incredible quantities of whitefish, inconnu, and other food fishes. An Indian busy watching his nets is not going to bother much with gathering ducks' eggs.

The high cost of ammunition—ten cents, twelve and a half cents, fifteen cents for a loaded shotgun shell, and a proportionately high cost of loose ammunition for muzzle-loaders—is the best reason why the Indian does not kill more ducks. In the lower posts, when the flight of geese and ducks is on, he will shoot for his winter's meat to some extent; and some of the best duckshots I ever saw were halfbreeds in Alberta and Saskatchewan—some of them market shooters for white men. The total number of wildfowl killed by all the Indians of the north does not compare with the number we kill in the winter and spring.

To begin with, there are not nearly so many Indians up in that country as you would think—perhaps not over fifty families tributary to one post, twice that number to another; we never, even in treaty-payment times, saw over three hundred Indians together at any one time at any one place.

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Personally I never saw a duck or goose feather round an Indian camp all the time I was in the north. To be sure it was not yet time for them to begin their fall shooting; and to be sure I was not along the Arctic coast where the Eskimos kill many wildfowl in the spring—that is to say, many in proportion to their number, though the total number of Eskimos is not very large, counting all of both bands—the Kogwolloks and the Nānātāmās. But I got the news of the Arctic coast.

Old Peter Loutit, at Chippewyan, could not have told us where the white geese or wavies bred, except that it was somewhere in the Arctics. Neither could you or I have told him much more definitely. The white geese do not breed anywhere on the Mackenzie, but somewhere on the islands north of the Mackenzie and perhaps on a limited part of the coast east of the mouth of the Mackenzie.

Now within the last few years numbers of whaling ships have been wintering at Herschel Island, just west of the Mackenzie; and these whaling ships prowl off to the east and northeast after their game, going where the Eskimos cannot go. In this way the whalers have located some of the breeding grounds of the white geese. The whaling settlement at Herschel has sometimes contained between two hundred and fifty and five hundred men. It

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may be imagined that in the spring these men would be apt to fancy wildfowl and wildfowl eggs.

The report was common on the Mackenzie that the whalers had discovered where the white geese nest and that in the spring they used a good many of their eggs. The very color of this bird, like that of the white fox, seems to mark it as the most northerly example of its family. We may fairly say, therefore, that the white man has, to some extent at least, gotten in on the most northerly breeding grounds of our wildfowl. The last secret is known, the last natural sanctuary is invaded.

And it is the white man who is to be dreaded. In old times, when the natives of this continent lived altogether on wild game, they never wiped out or perceptibly decreased a wild species. They had no cold storage and no endless market; and they were lazy and lived from hand to mouth; they did not waste and they did not kill for the sake of killing. These same traits exist today among the natives of the north all the way to the Arctic Ocean. What they kill may be called negligible as a factor of decrease in migratory fowl. They kill fish, moose, caribou, big stuff, and live along the lines of least resistance. It is folly to accuse them of destroying the wildfowl, for they do not. This is the judgment of all the white men who live in that country

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and who have, therefore, had better opportunity for being posted than anyone could have who simply passes through on a hurried trip.

However great or small the native factor of destruction may be, it is not more apt to lessen than to increase in extent; and taking the net results of mixed white and native occupancy of that upper country, in these days of gradually improving transportation and gradually increasing knowledge about the upper shooting grounds, we are not to expect that the number of wildfowl killed in the Far North will lessen, but that it will increase. That is still a great wilderness, but the white man is edging into it all the time.

As to the country itself, as we saw it, we passed through hundreds and hundreds of miles of country far more suitable for moose and lynx than for geese and ducks. Once in a while we would see a low and marshy shore, but this did not often happen. Of course there are hundreds and thousands of miles on both sides of the river of which the traveler knows nothing and of which no one knows very much; but the consensus of opinion, made up from reports of the Geologic Survey and from those of hunters and trappers, by no means indicates that Upper Canada is a vast marsh, suitable for a breeding ground of wildfowl.

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There are thousands of miles of mountains in that country, hundreds of thousands of miles of forests, and thousands of miles of flat barren soil. Every one of these miles is to be subtracted from the acreage of the potential breeding grounds of the mythical North, regarding which our information has been so vague.

Off to the east of the Mackenzie River, east of Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake, in the Barren Grounds country, and between that and Hudson Bay, there is a vast region of which little is known. Reports coming from Indians or others do not indicate that it swarms with wildfowl; in fact, we found the greater part of the country through which we traveled on foot in those upper latitudes to be covered not with marshes but with tundra. The tundra covers the foothills and the mountain slopes, and the flats along the rivers as well.

In brief the tundra is moss that grows in tussocks or niggerheads—*têtes des femmes*, the French call them. These womanheads rise out of the icy mire or cold water; or the solid covering of the moss rests practically on ice that does not melt. A few shrubs grow up through this moss. The tundra is a good place for rabbits or caribou or other ruminants, but is useless for wildfowl.

And it must be remembered that when they go

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north to the nesting grounds the ducks and geese are obliged to have food in the summer as much as in the winter. It would be foolish to make any sweeping statements about a country so large that no one has even explored it; but what I want to say is that you can travel for two thousand miles directly up the center of the north and south flyway of the fowl and you will see mighty few feeding grounds or nesting grounds. I do not want to say anything about what we ought to have seen or might have seen, but only about what we did not see.

Anyone interested in a systematic study of the bird life of that upper country should get the report of Mr. Edward A. Preble, of the Biological Survey, which is printed as Bulletin Number 27 of the Department of Agriculture, under the title, "North American Fauna." Mr. Preble spent considerable time in the Athabasca-Mackenzie region. He is a scientist and an observer, and he has brought out the most comprehensive knowledge regarding the migratory birds, as well as all the other game of that country, which thus far has been put into print. His report is worth having in the library of any American sportsman. It may perhaps be more reassuring than my own, and it certainly will be more comprehensive and more apt to be accurate. It covers, however, only examples of actual phenom-

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ena seen on the ground; and Mr. Preble concerns himself more with the species and the habits of the species and less with the general totals of supply and demand.

By the time we had crossed the Rocky Mountains on our trip it was late in July. By that time we saw a great many young mallards beginning to fly; and at a point on the Porcupine River about a hundred miles east of its junction with the Yukon we saw rather large numbers of mallards. At one or two of the bayous a gun or two might have had a very good shoot; but in the old ducking days on the Kankakee marsh, had we seen no more mallards than we saw there on the Porcupine, we should not have considered the flight by any means a good one.

On the Yukon Flats, at the mouth of the Porcupine River, there is supposed to be quite an extensive breeding ground of wildfowl; but the Yukon between that point and Dawson was a swift stream, broken into many channels, flowing between willow-covered islands which did not look marshy, but, on the contrary, at that time of year were quite dry and without probable duck food to any great extent.

Without doubt a large part of the California duck life breeds along the upper Yukon, but I do not think we were far enough down the river to get into any very considerable breeding grounds. In short,

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and to repeat, out of the whole five thousand miles of waterway from Edmonton and round to Skagway, there was very, very little visible nesting ground for wildfowl. This was a great surprise to me, for, in common with almost all other American sportsmen, I was of the vague belief that pretty much all that upper country was exclusively devoted to raising ducks for us Americans to shoot.

The delta of the Mackenzie is quite a large region—say, a hundred miles by seventy-five—covered by scores of channels and occasional marshes or lakes. Along the main channels, however, you will see the banks rather sharp-cut through a deep, rich, alluvial soil covered with heavy willows. We passed through only the southern edge of the delta but our local advice was pretty accurate. It ran to the effect that ducks were scarcer than they had been and that there never had been any vast, continuous rookery or breeding ground in that part of the world.

In general it is at the mouths or deltas of these great northern rivers that the largest breeding grounds are found. It is there that the current loses its velocity and through many ages has deposited silt, out of which grow grasses and plants suitable for food of the wildfowl.

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The great delta of the Peace River, the Quatres Fourches country of Lake Athabasca, the delta of the Slave River where it debouches into Great Slave Lake—all these are low, flat areas showing seas of marshes and grasses. Perhaps these, with the delta of the Mackenzie, and that of the Yukon, and certain less well-known tracts on the west shore of Hudson Bay, may be called the greatest of all these northern breeding grounds. It is not the case that the wildfowl go north as far as they can get before they lay their eggs. Read Mr. Preble's report and you will find how the wildfowl district themselves in that upper country.

Aside from these great natural breeding grounds, the total mileage of which is altogether less than has been supposed, all the remainder of the wildfowl which come to us from that upper wilderness must breed round the edges of the smaller lakes, or else in regions not yet known. This latter supposition is not worth considering. Taking out of the sum total of known and admitted northern breeding grounds all this impossible country, such as the tundra and the plateaus, the mountains and the dry alluvial banks, we shall have left no such vast area of nesting ground as we have all supposed.

I am convinced that this is an accurate and conservative statement; and I am of the belief that the

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best nesting grounds for wildfowl this country ever had are in lower and not upper Canada, are now easily accessible by means of railroad communication, and are practically getting ready for the same history as that of Minnesota and the Dakotas.

We passed along the flyway of most of our marsh ducks and many of our deepwater ducks, as we see them in the United States. In wide parts of the Mackenzie River we saw a great many scoters, more of that species than any other bird noted. We did not see very many wild geese. The natives say they breed far to the east and the traders say that Hudson Bay is where the Canada geese breed. The Canada geese, for instance, do not come to Lake Athabasca, where the shooting is all on the white geese.

There is wild celery in one little lake I know of close to Fort McPherson, which is in the southern edge of the Mackenzie River delta, on the Peel River. This plant may exist in others of the little lakes between that point and the Arctic Red River. I did not hear it spoken of as generally distributed across the country, and do not believe it is often found in the Far North.

It was an odd thing to see our redbreasted robin far above the Arctic Circle. I saw a robin's nest at Fort MacMurray, two hundred and fifty-seven

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miles north of Edmonton, and numbers of robins round Fort McPherson, under the midnight sun. I saw one jacksnipe on the summit of the Rocky Mountains, at a pass which is only about a hundred miles south of the Arctic Ocean. I saw one specimen of the sharp-tailed grouse, killed in the willows close to Fort McPherson, its markings almost the same as those of the sharp-tail of Saskatchewan or the Dakotas.

When I state that we traveled forty-five hundred miles on three great waterways of the upper north and never saw a bear, moose, deer, or caribou, or anything else larger than a fox, and that we saw relatively few broods of ducks, I think that though we should not reason from one particular experience to a general or sweeping conclusion, it will be admitted that the north is a land of want and not a land of plenty as to wildfowl or any other great natural supply of food. The truth is, in that country the white man or the red man thinks more of grub than he does of anything else, and always from the point of want. It is always a starving country.

Now, since both white and red men live there, close to such breeding grounds as there are, and since, moreover, they both say the wildfowl are decreasing and not increasing, what is to be our

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logical conclusion as to the supply of wildfowl we may expect from that Far-Northern country?

Probably the more accurate conclusion is that a great many of the wildfowl we shall in the future shoot in the United States will be bred rather in the extreme southern than the extreme northern parts of the Dominion of Canada. These breeding grounds will supply part of the Atlantic coast fowl as well as those of the Mississippi Valley and the Gulf coast. The Pacific and Yukon breeding grounds will supply the California coast in the winter. Some of the Arctic islands, as yet unknown, will supply a species or more of geese which migrate southwest across the Rockies to the Pacific each fall. Other Arctic islands, but partially known, will supply lessening numbers of the white geese. The Hudson Bay region, decreasing and not improving in productivity, will send us our lessening number of Canada geese. A few birds will breed in scattering fashion in our own upper-western states when we stop hammering them in the spring.

For twenty-five years the writer has been more or less a student—for fifteen years more or less a student in a professional way—of the supply of game in America, more especially in Western America. The decrease of every species in every locality

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is, when one stops to think of it, an accurate and studious cause for actual consternation. The speed and the completeness of the disappearance of our game has been something beyond belief.

By no means phenomenal of themselves, none the less the writer's observations have been carried on for a quarter of a century in every state of the West, in every state of the Northwest, Middle West and the South; and he has seen the flyway of the fowl from the mouth of the Rio Grande to the mouth of the Mackenzie. Without the slightest wish to be sensational or even striking, the definite conclusion of one man who, for a good part of his life, has been paid to know about this sort of thing, is that we did not get our national law one minute too soon, and cannot hang on to it too tightly. Not all the best agencies we used before that, not all the combined attempts of all the thinking people of this country previous to the year 1913, availed to stop the continual and accelerating disappearance of all the game of all the states of the entire Union. And, without knowing it, we were drawing heavily on Canada all the time. You see what Canada is today and what may be expected of her. It is little, and will be less.

Let us hope that the American people have learned their lesson. And let us hope that they

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finally will conclude that it is time to do a little sowing if we are going to reap this crop any longer. The national migratory wildfowl law will not enforce itself, good as it is—though it will come a great deal closer to enforcing itself than any state law, for the arm of Uncle Sam after all is far longer and stronger than that of any governor in the United States. Heretofore our ducks and geese had no chance. Today all our grouse, our quails, all our upland birds, have no chance; but our ducks and geese and our other migratory birds do have a fighting chance. In the name of plain North American horse sense, we ought to hail these facts with enthusiasm. We ought to do what we can to live on the dividends of this wealth which literally has wings, and not wholly to spend our capital in our old spendthrift fashion.

It is not a question of whether or not a few ducking clubs will have better or worse shooting. It is not even a question of whether the average American with a gun will kill more or less birds in his particular locality. The law does not abolish shooting; it simply sets a national harvest-time for a valuable crop. It is in line with the tendency of the times. It is a blow at special privilege.

North of latitude fifty-five there are no game laws now—nor ought there to be. The people up

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there need the game for food and they will not wipe it out.

I once asked an Indian on the Peace River whether it was safe to leave our camp unguarded.

"Why not?" he asked in surprise. "There will be no white men who will come here!"

It is not the untutored savage who is the ruthless and ignorant destroyer, a selfish breaker of the law; it is the white man, the proud heir of the ages.¹

¹A test case of the Weeks-McLean Law has, since the above was written, been taken to the Supreme Court of the United States. At midwinter of 1916, the decision had not yet been handed down. The short-sighted greed of certain American shooters is an astonishing thing.

X

**BEAR-HUNTING—THE SPORT OF
PRESIDENTS**



X

BEAR-HUNTING—THE SPORT OF PRESIDENTS

INTROSPECTION is not good for human beings. It leads to neurasthenia, wife-beating, new religions, freak clothes, Nature-faking, all sorts of things. Turn the eye outward, and there are the earth and the sky; likewise many wild creatures, such as never were in the Arr Noovo of modern handmade Nature.

Taking life just as it has come to me from the outside, I confess that I personally have never seen the wild animals fashionable in the New Thought; and I have never hesitated to go hunting, when I got the chance, with rifle, and not notebook, in hand. I have never met a soulful wolverene, have never encountered a magazine lynx, and never run across a Sunday newspaper wolf in all my simple, uneventful life. I have seen pictures of wild animals in the magazines which gave me cold shivers; but, without pride or shame, I can say that in a fairly broad experience with big game, I never met a wild animal which gave me any shivers at

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all. I believe this is the experience of most big-game hunters.

I ought, in my own case, to note two exceptions. Twice during my life I have been frightened into shivers. The first time was when I was young. It was a Girl that did it. She had long chestnut hair, and very white teeth, and very large eyes, and very small front feet. My knees shook every time I saw that creature coming. I used to walk around the block to dodge her, then come around behind on the other side, planning what I would say when I met her face to face. I never did say it. She is married now, though not to me.

The other animal that scared me was a rabbit. I had taken down the family shotgun from the armorial bearings in the old wainscoted hall, and was projecting around a hazel-brush patch—wrapped in thought, I don't doubt, about the Girl. All at once, as I chanced to look up, I saw, sitting at the edge of the brush, about five feet from me, crouched in the attitude of attack, with staring eyes looking straight into mine precisely like those of the lynx in the magazine, this ferocious creature with its ears laid back tight to its head and every muscle of its tense form strained as though about to spring. It did spring, too, although it did not land on me. My father said the thing was scared until it was

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paralyzed. If so, it had none the best of me. I now know that I lost an opportunity to work up a New Thought story in which plain "rabbit" might have been spelled with a large R.

Bears always had a fascination for me in the abstract, although in the concrete they have always proved rather a disappointment. The ordinary bear of the Middle, Eastern, and Southern States is the biggest coward of all animals, unless it is the ferocious lynx *Arr Noovo* or the savage Sunday wolf. The grizzly of the Rockies is very scarce today, and he is not the grizzly of Lewis and Clark, by the same measure that the high-power rifle of today is not the arm of small-bore, muzzle-loading days. Taking them as they came, black, brown, red, gray, pink, blue, cerise, mauve, and *écrù* bears, a dozen or so, I presume I have had my share, though never quite enough.

It is in the spring that a hunter's fancy turns to thoughts of bear, for in the spring the robes are best and the bears are most easily found. One spring the commanding officer in my household measured off a place about ten feet square on the floor, and delicately hinted that an Oriental rug would do well there. It is by industry and economy that we advance in the world. It promptly occurred to me that it would be much more expedient to kill

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a grizzly whose hide would just fit the space. On the whole it might have been cheaper to buy the Oriental rug, and much cheaper to have bought a grizzly. But that is how the Grizzly Bear Company, Limited, came to be organized.

I reserved a controlling interest in the stock, but parted with a small block to my first department head, a mountain man of British Columbia, with whom I had hunted grizzlies before. The rest of the staff we decided to select on the ground; and the ground, after much deliberation, we decided must be the far-off corner of Northwest Alaska, where the largest bears in the world are found, because it required a large one to fill the space mapped out on the floor. We reasoned that success would be most probable in a country where the trees are small and the bears are large. We had both hunted many countries where the trees were large and the bears small. To sit down in the ice water at the foot of a mountain and wait for a problematical bear to appear at a problematical spot at a problematical hour seemed to me, on mature deliberation, to involve a great industrial waste.

We freely listened to advice, but wisely took none of it. If you begin to give way to the charm of the railway folder or the licensed guide you might

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as well join the innumerable caravan of those who really get their grizzlies with a trap. Committed to no locality, we put our highly select grub-list on board a steamer at Seattle and sailed the ocean blue along the fifteen hundred miles of wholly tin-can and partly tin-horn coast of a country which most folk think is like Siberia for wilderness; but which is really by far more like Kansas—with no wife's folks to fall back on.

Few climates leave bear robes good after the middle of June. Our bear company started in April for the bear country; but the length of the journey, which brought the end of May upon us, left us very uneasy. To lie in wait at a salmon stream in the summer and pot a mangy bear with no fur on his skin was not included in our business system. That sort of rug would never get past the household desk.

In Alaska it rains all the time during the spring, and by and by it rains some more. It was on an especially moist morning, and at about 4 A. M., when our good ship pulled up at the dock at the town of Kodiak, on Kodiak Island, the last and most abandoned of our national possessions. When we bought the territory from Russia we tried to give her back Kodiak Island, but she wouldn't listen to it for a minute, so we have it now. To look at Kodiak

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you couldn't tell whether it was New England, Italy, or the showerbath at an athletic club.

Kodiak Island being wholly outside the concern of Divine Providence, the latter was jointly represented by the United States Commissioner, the Deputy United States Marshal and the Alaska Commercial Company, with some argument as to precedence. I met the agent of the Alaska Commercial Company, who led me up to a high place in his storage loft and showed me scores of bearskins, some of them large as Oriental rugs. He advised me against going farther, saying that here on Kodiak Island we could get patient bears with short noses, long claws and sociable dispositions; whereas, if we remained on the steamer, it might be Christmas before we got into the bear country that we proposed to reach.

I had four minutes in which to decide, and as president of the company decided in three. The other minute I spent in getting my companion, our guns and blankets off the boat. As to our highly select grub outfit from Seattle, it went on to Siberia.

“Do you think,” asked the captain of the boat, with his hand on the bell-rope, “that I can dig your camp stuff from under forty-eight tons of freight in three-quarters of a minute?”

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Ah, well, the coffee of Kodiak was, perhaps, not quite so good; mayhap the tea had smaller flavor of the Orient; but the bacon, the bean, the prune, and eke the salt of commerce are much the same the world over, after all. Any business system must be flexible enough to meet sudden emergencies like this.

We now added to our staff two new members, saffron brown in exterior color, Aleuts by tribe, though of what exact extraction none might say. First was Kuroki—so called because I could not pronounce his other name and because he looked like that Japanese commander. He had been a cook, a steamboat waiter, prospector, miner, stevedore, and other things. Also he was a mighty hunter before the Lord, if you left it to him. The other man, Czaroff, was a Rembrandt study; an old samurai of the sea, a sea-otter hunter and hence an aristocrat. He, being an aristocrat, always let Kuroki do the work. Kuroki also let anyone do the work who felt like it.

The question of transportation is important in any business enterprise. Of a United States Deputy Marshal we chartered a brand-new schooner, the most sausage-like craft that ever was on land or sea. Her name was Linea L—, but we called her Literal L— for short. At last, with the dory

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towing us ahead and both wind and tide fortunately astern, we managed to get her down the coast and landed on the shingled shores of a mountain-girt arm of the sea known as Kaludiak Bay. There the schooner left us, the wind and tide both having changed and started the other way, by good fortune, else she would be there yet.

At last we were alone! It was the first week in June. In two weeks the hides would begin to go bad. Rather short shrift for us, after nearly two months of preparation and travel. It was wet, and our tent, designed for man-back transportation and not for schooner travel, was small. We hunted up a deserted native hut, or barrabara as it is called, a low-walled, earthen-roofed affair, where the fire is built on the ground in the center and the smoke never does get out. We put fresh grass on the floor, fumigated it, and installed our stock of goods there as headquarters. Then I took a walk along the coast. The first thing I saw was a path, one made by human feet!

“Kuroki,” said I, “why and whence this path?”

“Ah,” said Kuroki, “my peoples make it. Plenty time they come here to hunt and fish.”

“And do you suppose for a minute bears are going to come here, too?” I asked him coldly.

“I dunno,” said Kuroki, standing on one foot.

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"The captain of schooner, those Marshal, want to come here."

"Stung again!" said I. "The Grizzly Bear Company, Limited, has been classified as a tourist only!"

A school of whales was spouting not three hundred fathoms distant from our camp. A score of eagles sailed about, waiting for the salmon to run in our little creek near by. The mountains, rude and snow-clad, stood all about. It was a savage, seemly, fascinating corner of the world. Our schooner was gone and we could not get away for two weeks at least. So the entire office force went into executive session in the barrabara to discuss ways and means of making the best of it.

The next morning the boss and the first department head took the dory and sailed ten miles to the head of another bay where the traces of humanity were not quite so obvious. We left Czaroff and took Kuroki. "My peoples," said Kuroki, "all time stay in boat. Go along beach in boat, watch mountains, s'pose see bear, then plenty time get out and go shoot um."

We explained to Kuroki that under the new working office rules, that sort of hunting was merely a reminiscence. I could readily see that as there was nothing in the way of food to bring the bears down out of the hills, they no doubt were still up in the

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hills. Discarding old and time-tried Kodiak methods, I used the Chicago system, which says that the best way is to go out after business and not wait for it to come to you. Kuroki grew pale at the thought of climbing these mountains, but there was no hope for him. He joined us on our first stroll, twenty miles or so toward the summit of a pass far back in the interior. By night he was sagging badly but still smiling. He knew he was in the hands of his loving friends. Also, he was scared to be alone.

No bears, no sign of bears, rewarded us at the close of our first day's hunt; but we saw hundreds of salmon skeletons, marks of last fall's fishing; and we saw such bear trails as I never knew existed in the world—trails worn deep into the soil during hundreds of years of use, perhaps, with prints in them made apparently by doormats rather than actual bare bear feet. Most of these older trails were double, the bears being so wide in the chest that they could not put their feet down in a single trail. The reach from foot to foot was sometimes longer than a man could step. I measured one track in the snow which was as long as my rifle barrel from front to back sight. From this island many skins have come over ten feet in length, a few over thirteen feet. One hide is said to have measured sixteen feet and a half square when stretched. Of

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course, the traders stretch all these hides as hard as they can; but it may be seen that the bears are almost unbelievably large. The Rockies hold nothing approaching them. We sighed and lifted up our eyes to the hills. "If we could only run across one of *these* old boys!" said my ardent lieutenant.

In the Rockies we sometimes get a grizzly to show by baiting him with some large animal; but on Kodiak Island there are no large animals but the bears themselves. They get their immense stature from abundant feed of salmon, on which they live for most of the year when not asleep. At present, they were no doubt digging roots and eating grass until the berries and fish should come. I asked Kuroki what we could use for bait.

"I dunno," said he. "My peoples no use bait. Bear smell um bait, him run twenty mile. Smell um mans, run forty mile."

"How far back in the hills do you think they are, Kuroki?"

"I dunno. My peoples stay on beach. Only know, s'pose bear smell mans, him run forty mile."

"Then your big bear seems a good deal of a coward, eh?"

"I dunno," said Kuroki. "Plenty my peoples get killed by bears, all right, all right."

As it appeared that we had come far and learned

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little, we resolved to fall back on good business usage and employ our own judgment. From the first day I resolved to forget all the advice I had received as to the personal peculiarities of Kodiak bear, and treat them just as though they were Rocky Mountain bear and follow them far and frequent.

Our company was now disposed as follows: Czaroff was at the main camp, supposedly scouring his valley for sign, but really trying to eat eight squares a day. We three of the field force divided, the lieutenant taking one valley and Kuroki and I another. In turn, we two separated to cover as much country as possible. If possible the boss was to have the first shot at any bear discovered, but if that was not possible, the bear was to be killed by the discoverer, and ten dollars was to go as bonus in addition to daily wages in case a bear was found. Personal sport was pretty much lost sight of in the stress for time and the stern need of success.

We had come far, and we had been stung. We were now a joint-stock company, with preferred and common stock, it is true, but with the latter well represented on the directorate.

Now witness the reward of good business methods. I had not hunted three hours the second day before I came to the edge of a deep cañon, along the rim of which were plainly to be seen the dig-

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gings of three bears—not one, but three, and all of them very decent ones at that. Evidently they had been feeding along this cañon for more than a week. Preferred stock rose rapidly about fifty points, then and there.

But the sign was so mixed and so abundant that it was hard to trace. The bears had slept here and eaten here, but which way had they gone?

Preferred stock took a decided slump in the course of the afternoon; for, do the best I could, I was unable to puzzle out the course of the great brutes which had left their record here. Common stock, also, as represented by Kuroki, was closing weak, Kuroki having, as I could tell through my field glasses, found a warm spot against a rock where he could sit tight and hunt after the fashion of "his peoples." Hunting after the fashion of my own peoples, I pushed steadily on to the top of my mountain, but did not cut the trail.

Then I crossed over a high shoulder, high up in the clouds of mist, leaving far below me a grand panorama of the sea in bands of dulling colors—such a picture as you must go hunting in these white high hills ever to witness. At six o'clock in the evening, on the breast of a great snow-field, I flung myself down to rest before starting down for the rendezvous at the boat. I had not found my

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bear. Market was closing weak for the industrials. At last, as I took in the wide expanse of broken country that lay for five miles ahead of me, I saw something which forced me to look again.

To the novice big game never looks as he expects it to look, and perhaps a novice might not have looked a second time. There was a dark blotch or blur down there on the gray-brown surface beyond the far side of a great cañon. It did not look quite like a rock, nor quite like a tree—it seemed somehow suspicious. Fearing to take my eyes from it while I reached for the field glasses, which are a part of any bear hunter's equipment, I gazed steadily, asking to be convinced that it was not a rock and not a tree or bush or blotch of moss upon the mountainside. At last suspicion became conviction. The drab blur showed motion, which always means game. It split into two, into three parts, all now in motion! I heard someone say, in a voice which I presume was my own, but which sounded small up there on the great wind-swept mountain top, "Bear, by Heaven!" There is no other big game on Kodiak Island except bear. I knew to a certainty now that these were my three bears which had no doubt scented us that morning ten miles back in the valley and had promptly proceeded to leave the country. It was great good fortune to get sight of them

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again. So much for perseverance and good soliciting! Now how to handle the business offered? It was a large order.

The glasses made out the game now plainly. There were three of them, great, shambling creatures, full of the look of rude, coarse strength. Their coats were dark, as I could see even at four miles' distance. That meant that all the spring they had been high up in the mountains and had not sun-burned or rubbed their hides. Good specimens they surely were, in full coat; very typical of their species, not with yellow, mangy hides rubbed full of bare patches.

Apparently the bears were still uneasy over something. Once in a while all three took a long run, up toward the snow-field on the farther peak. Sometimes two of them would stop and fight, boxing savagely. The third nearly always kept behind, and more often lay down, as though he had fed fully and did not care to travel. The appearance of rude, shaggy strength which the great bears presented was impressive, indeed fascinating. They were bears—real ones, wild ones, big ones with no tin cans to occupy them and no iron bars to restrain them. It was a good, large order. My glasses brought them into full view though they were four miles or more away. I recall few more interesting

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moments than those spent here in the snow, watching these great creatures at actual first hand.

The wind was straight from me to them and it was useless to try to stalk, even did they settle down and cease working on out of the country. I doubted whether I could get around them, but was just about to start down for the attempt when I heard shuffling in the snow behind me and saw Kuroki, somewhat out of breath. He had been trailing me across the mountain, thinking I might be lost, or that he might be, I do not know which. We both decided that, slight as the chance was, it was better now than it might be the next day, by which time the game might be altogether gone.

“The Grizzly Bear Company, Limited, expects every man to do his duty, Kuroki,” said I, as I took up a hole in my belt. Then we took a flying run across the snow-face which carried us over a mile angling down. So we reached the broken ground along many cañons, and labored hard in alder tangles and devil’s-club. We must hasten and yet we must wait; for until the wind should shift with the night cool, and come down the cañons instead of up from the sea, we could not hope to stalk our game successfully.

Perhaps it was the ten dollars, perhaps the hope of glory, which kept Kuroki going. I admit he let

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out an unsuspected notch or so. At last we were over the last cañon but one, and far below the spot where we had last seen the bears. Still, at each ridge we used caution, which was well; for finally, at about half-past ten o'clock, as we reached the rim of a desperate rock-rent where the white water far below had left us wet to the waist, we peered over and saw that our bears had changed their course, and were coming almost directly down to meet us. Three-quarters of a mile would put us within shot! Alas, much of that—all the last half of it—must be directly across an open snow-field, where we must be in plain sight of the game!

The grizzly bear is a very cautious animal in some ways and a very careless one in others. He may stand and watch you indifferently, if he does not smell you; and then, if he gets scent, he may wheel and run. We waited now, desperately anxious, until the wind came a trifle on the left cheek. We risked the chance of the bears seeing us, knowing that a grizzly has very bad eyes and does not rely much upon them. We hoped only that we could pass the snow-slope and get to the edge of the brush strip beyond, where perhaps we would be within range.

We did reach this cover, wet now to the skin all over with snow and ice water. Preferred and com-

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mon stock about at par now, and the market strong!

Alas! Again there yawned before us another cañon, deep and narrow. We were on one edge; directly on the other were the three bears, walking, pausing, grumbling, digging, feeding, but still uneasy. It was over three hundred yards; and now it was half-past eleven in the night, the pale Alaska light being just strong enough to permit the chance. The Grizzly Bear Company, Limited, worked the open shop, and recognized neither labor unions nor the eight-hour day. In Alaska the summer night is almost no night at all.

There was nothing for it but to shoot. If we tried to cross the cañon we would be seen, smelled and heard, and the bears would be gone long before we could get across. I do not believe in long-range shooting if it can be helped, but now it could not be helped. I picked out a nice place in a pool of ice water at the edge of the cañon, and whispered, "You may fire when you are ready, Kuroki; but if you shoot before I do, I'll blow your head off!"

Of the bears—which now looked excellently large and interesting—one was lying down, a second was still facing us squarely, and apparently deliberately watching us. The third, a brisk, dark one, big and burly, was walking through the brush toward the

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open. This was the one I wanted, so I kept a hand on Kuroki until this last fellow emerged and also sat up to see what we were.

Ah, let the anaemic frame rules for themselves! They shall not for me, nor for any who have felt the still, steady, fierce comfort of some moment just such as this. Carefully and steadily I fired, and after that the action became general.

Instinct tells a trained rifleman whether or not his shot will serve. I knew I would strike the big bear, and at the crack of the rifle was not surprised to see it drop back, apparently done for. I was surprised, however, at the tremendous roar, growl, or howl that it uttered—the loudest I ever heard a bear give; a hoarse, croaking note, with something like the sound of feeding circus animals in it. But it straightened, floundered, roared as I struck it three times more, rapidly. I heard Kuroki hammering away also, but did not know what he was doing. My bear fell in the brush, apparently dead; and I swung the rifle across to where I saw the second bear still sitting and staring stupidly straight at us. There was something uncanny about this, and I do not pretend to explain it. There is always something hard to explain about every such episode where all happens in a flash or so. But certainly I saw Kuroki fire directly at this bear and not kill it;

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and certainly I fired square at its chest. Then, apparently many seconds later, it sat and stared, and at last let go all over, all at once, and rolled, stone-dead, fifty feet down the mountainside toward the cañon edge. Kuroki exulted that he had killed his bear, and I thought he had perhaps done so, though later I found his bullet in a hindleg, my own through the chest.

The result of these two shots I do not pretend to explain; but there were our two bears down. The third had vanished. Kuroki said he had shot once at it and missed it. I never saw this bear at all, my own game having kept me busy longer than I had expected.

But now common stock and preferred seemed pretty much the same in value. I looked for my first bear, and it was getting up again and moving off through the alders! Again the rifles began, but we could do nothing through the dense cover. The Grizzly Bear Company, Limited, was facing disaster!

“Run on across, Kuroki!” I called, when at last a shot seemed to stop the old fellow for a time. He lay down and, I thought, was dying. “Kill that cripple if he’s still alive, and meet me at the other dead bear. I’ll kill it if it gets up.”

I was well-nigh worn out with the hard work to

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date, and willing to leave easy details to subordinates. Kuroki went on over, and as soon as I had picked up our hats and belts I followed him. The snow was red, the trail plain, but somehow Kuroki managed not to find that cripple. Perhaps the cripple seemed too vigorous to suit him. He said it went down in a farther cañon and that we could not get it until the next day. It was now midnight, and the light was very dim.

Wet, cold, hungry, we skinned out our only bear, and packed down the awful mountainside in the sheer dark, fording the river far below, where it roared not quite so wildly over the rocks. So, at half-past two in the morning, we reached the beach where our lieutenant should have been. He, thinking that the Grizzly Bear Company, Limited, was permanently disbanded, had taken the dory and gone to camp. We built a fire and in an hour saw the dory tossing in the wild sea as he crossed the dangerous arm of the ocean once again. Then some sort of breakfast, many congratulations, and a few plans.

Organization again proved its worth. Kuroki and I were pretty well done out, but a fresh man remained. He was delegated to finish the work we had begun. The question was, how could he find our crippled bear which by this time, we thought,

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surely must be dead. Business again resumed sway in our councils. I preferred to take it easy on the beach for a few hours. Kuroki, in view of ten dollars more in hand paid, reluctantly consented to guide the new troops up the mountain. He lasted until the scene of the battle was reached. Then he grew very much fatigued, and fain would pause. No Aleut likes crippled grizzlies.

Ten hours later I heard a shout and saw the rest of the staff appear on the edge of the shore far down the bay. They threw down from their shoulders not one, but two more hides! Common stock was marked up on a sharp bulge.

It turned out that they had found the third bear which had escaped unhurt, and Barnes killed it close up as it lay near the cripple. The latter he fired at in a thicket several times, and finally finished with almost his last shot, close at hand, it acting rather ugly. This hide had eight bullets through it and was fairly a partnership affair, as well as the one Kuroki and I had accounted for together. Had I reserved all the shooting for the preferred stock we might not have had nearly a doryful of prime hides, as we now had.

It was now night of the second day since we had started on this hunt, having been on our feet for thirty-six hours with only one real meal during that

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time. The labor situation looked ominous but peace counsel ruled. We were tired but happy when we took boat for camp, where we pulled off a very successful trade banquet in honor of our good fortune.

The next day found us at our main camp where we discovered Czaroff entirely content with life. When we came upon him he had his mouth full of bacon and both hands in a kettle of stew. He had gained about eight pounds in weight. Kuroki now pleading disablement, we took on the fresher man again, Czaroff making the next hunt, ten miles away by dory to a new valley, in Kuroki's place. Again we parted forces; again we combed out twenty miles of country with each party; again we made the interior passes at the heads of our valleys; but this time we found no bears nor any fresh sign. We had now seen as much of the interior of Kodiak Island as any white or other hunter ever did, perhaps, and in three days' actual hunting had hung up three hides. Others might have done as much. Our motto of business supremacy did not allow us to loaf, as yet. Out must go the full field force once more. We made a night voyage across an arm of the sea that came very near being the last voyage for all of us, but providentially made camp to find Kuroki this time with his mouth full and both hands

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in the pot. We all fed deep and slept hard that wild night by the sea.

Again three of us took the field, and on the next day proceeded to repeat our regular system of covering as much ground as possible. Czaroff and I hunted for a time together, and once more, as fortune would have it, the boss was the lucky man at first getting sign of game. We had not been out three hours before I found fresh diggings in the alder thickets. Bears again! Yes, and by all fortunes of war, *three* of them again! Evidently one large bear and two smaller ones had been living here for a week or more.

But again the wind was bad. "*Natu karosha!*" muttered Czaroff. "Go home now! No good!" His courage was easily daunted unless all things were favorable.

The rules of the house, however, were inflexible. The company had to be whipped fair before it announced defeat. I showed him that by climbing high up the mountain we might get ahead of the game without its scenting us. Grudgingly he went with me a mile or so up the steeps, but with no enthusiasm, for he did not think the Grizzly Bear Company, Limited, could by any possibility repeat such luck as it had had.

Once more the white man's eye was better than

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that of the native, as indeed it nearly always is, as well as the white man's rifle-shooting. Czaroff crossed an open glade without making any sign of game; but, as luck had it, once more I caught a glimpse of something a mile or so away which did not look quite like a rock or a tree. I swung the glasses on it, and the next instant was frantically beckoning to Czaroff to get down out of sight. There, on a mountainside across the valley from us, standing now on her haunches and swinging her great head from side to side as she scanned the country back of her, was a great bear, a fine one, gray on the shoulders and back and dark on the flanks, a grand specimen of the Kodiak grizzly, worth coming all this way to see.

Presently the old lady swung down on all-fours and moved into the near-by thicket. Then I saw that she had with her two young cubs, of apparently eighteen months of age. A Kodiak bear cub of that age is about as big as a twelve-cylinder automobile.

"Mamma, two little boy," said Czaroff in sudden access of English. I nodded and asked him what he thought of the wind. "*Natu karosha!*" he said again. "No good! Mebbe no shoot um. I dinno."

At least we would try. We now hurried into the business of making the stalk, and soon reached a point where we could reconnoiter. Alas! Once

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more we were sidetracked by a deep-gashed cañon which rent the rough country for a mile. Beyond it was open ground with no cover, where the wind would go straight to our game; so we dared not try the approach there. We swung down the cañon, hoping to get below the game, which might take a notion to leave at any moment; but the further we hurried the worse matters became, for the cañon widened and deepened.

At last we pulled up on the high edge opposite the bears, once more, twice as far as one shoots at big game, and once more confronted with the alternative of taking a long shot or none at all. If we went lower down the steeps we should lose sight of our game at the first jump. Here, although it was hardly a sporting shot, we were high enough to command a view for some distance. Moreover, though I could not at that range pick a vital spot with certainty, I was confident I could disable the bear and perhaps kill it outright. In hunting stories you read about shooting a bear in the eye, or the heart, or other assorted spots. It is a mighty good rule to shoot it just where you can. Waiting for better breath, I presently fired; and down she went indeed, almost into the cañon, the shot having come surprisingly close to the backbone, as we later learned. But like a flash she was up again and into

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the thicket, going up the far mountainside at astonishing speed. We both fired again and again, but in the brush we could not land, and in the open the wet moss left no sign of our shots, so we were not confident of the range.

“Me hit um little boy!” crowed Czaroff, and I saw one of the cubs stumble. I swung on it and again it rolled. I fired at the third bear and it, too, rolled over. But then, in spite of all, we suffered the unspeakable chagrin of seeing our game apparently bound to escape, after all. I wished then I had not fired but had let it go unhurt. The rule for big game is to get close up, and now, in both our bear scrimmages, we had lost the keenness of close work through this chance configuration of the country.

The bears lumbered off in spite of us—fine ones, too, as we could see. “Good-by!” laughed Czaroff, and then added feelingly, almost all the English he knew, “San Francisco! California!” At least, he did his best at swearing.

The Grizzly Bear Company, Limited, it may be supposed, turned out in full force the next morning; and again business system saved the day. We put Barnes on the trail where we left it, and the rest of us went on down the coast and ascended the second valley, to intercept the game if it had crossed

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that way. All this country is very open and free from cover at the summit, and the glasses saved us many a mile.

At last we found our game. High up on a little snow-field at the top of a distant peak beyond our valley they were lying, all three—the old bear motionless, one of the cubs moving feebly. So then we could end it, after all. A sudden revulsion came over me. I was done with hunting for the time. I did not care to make the long climb for the sake of skinning a dead bear or killing a crippled cub. So I detailed the two natives to go across and end the business, while I waited for Barnes. I was rather sick of the affair.

I lay back in the sun, alone, and watched the wide panorama before me, on which the only sign of life was the two antlike figures which after a time appeared slowly toiling up the opposite face of the mountain. I half repented not going, was disposed to go on after. Had I done so I should have missed the most exciting bear hunt I ever knew—one in which I had no active part.

The two brown men crawled on up, skirting a long rent in the rocks, dodging low behind some cover as they reached the exposed summit. I saw them at last reach the rock-rim above the game, and knew how Czaroff proposed to make the ap-

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proach. Then, as though by some premonition, I saw the great gray lump that had lain on the snow, move, rise to its feet, take a pace or so, and then lie down! The old bear was not dead. How large, how very large, she looked. I say I have never felt fear of a bear, perhaps because I have mostly been too tired to feel anything but fatigue when after bear. But now, two miles away, I felt something like buck ague, the first time in my life. I thrilled. I shivered. I wondered if the men could do their work—wished and wished that I were with them now. I had taken too much for granted. The old bear was not dead at all!

Now the two younger bears began to move slowly a little way on in the snow, but soon they stopped. Slowly, catlike, a little at a time, I saw the hunters approach the hunted things. My blood never much leaped before in any hunting, but now it leaped. It was not sport but tragedy I was to witness. I did not like to look, but could not cease to gaze.

I saw the two hunters appear at the rim of the little pocket where the bears lay; saw them crouch, and aim and aim. Then came a spurt of blue, the smoke of Czaroff's rifle. Then followed shot after shot from both rifles. The giant grizzly flung herself once more to her feet, and stood at bay on the snow, which I saw redden under her.

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But all three of the bears kept their feet! What bungling! What bungling! They fired fifteen shots; and the game moved on. It reappeared at this side of the snow, at a little knoll just above the sheer cañon wall. And then ensued what might seem, in telling, a piece of imaginary hunting, but which occurred just as I say.

The two cubs moved off into the cover once more. I saw Kuroki come and peer over the edge, not seeming to care to come closer. I had had my eye on the giant she-bear a moment before as she stood near the rock-face. When I turned the glasses on her she was gone! Then I saw Czaroff crawl down a way and peer down. Even as I looked at the cubs, the old bear had let go and gone down the sheer cañon wall! They told me later that she roared all the way down. So, at last, she died. Though I have hunted much, I never knew a bear to die as she did, or to die so hard. But hers was a noble, a gallant ending of a valorous life.

I rushed down the mountain, forded the river below, and intercepted my men as they came down. They had not a hide nor a hair! The big bear, they said, was a spirit bear, a devil, which could not be killed! She had fallen down the rock-face along a cascade, plunged over this fall, and gone far out of sight under the snow-field at the floor of the

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deep cañon. No hand of man would ever get the hide of her; that was sure in their Aleut mind. And the cubs? They had supposed them gone also, and had started home, as they had worked long and were hungry. Then and there was discipline enacted. They had to turn and climb the mountain again with me. It was another hour before we had the crippled cubs killed and skinned, and dark then was at hand. The great gray robe must wait another day; but have it, I resolved, we must at any hazard.

The next day the full *personnel* of the Grizzly Bear Company, Limited, was again afield. We took the dory cable, also an oar for digging snow, and by noon we were at the foot of the cataract down which the old lady had slid in her tragic ending. It looked discouraging, but our luck held.

A crack or rent ran across the snow-field here, and this let light down under it and into the black cavern cut out by the waterway. Barnes stooped and looked down under the snow at the upper edge. He flung up his hands in joy. "I see her!"

Our bear was lying to one side of the center of the snow-field, damming up the flow of ice water. Barnes dropped down into the crack through the snow roof and slipped over her neck the cable which, standing in the spray, we passed down from above.

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Then, slowly, an inch at a time, all lifting and pulling together, all wet to the skin in the ice water, we hauled her forth, a monster weight.

I shall not soon forget the grim look of that great gray head when it showed above the rim of the snow roof. Hers was a splendid robe, without a blemish save where her nose had been skinned in the slide down the rocks two or three hundred feet, and one missing toenail, perhaps lost in the same way. More priceless than any Oriental rug is this one which covers a certain space in a certain floor today.

A meeting of the directors and stockholders of the Grizzly Bear Company, Limited, was called for twelve o'clock that night, at which time we got home with the last of our six hides, all secured within six days and under conditions where everything was against success. Now we talked with four mouths full and eight hands in the stew kettle. In the democracy of successful sport the stocks common and preferred were merged in one.

XI

HUNTING THE DEER

XI

HUNTING THE DEER

IN a prominent club of a Western city there may be seen a series of old German woodcuts depicting divers fashions of the chase of the deer a century or so ago in Europe. It would appear that the main thing in those days was to get the deer in any way he could be had. There are scenes showing deer chased by greyhounds, trailing hounds—all sorts of dogs; deer caught in heavy nets; deer driven into pens; deer driven through chutes past a platform containing noblemen firing upon them at a distance of three or four yards; deer pursued by horsemen, footmen—all sorts of men. In short, there would seem to have existed at the time these cuts were made a vast, delirious desire to exterminate the whole deer family as soon as possible.

Something of that same desire seems to have existed from that day to this. The chase of the stag has always been held to be one of the highest forms of all sport; and today, much as in the past, the

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game seems to be to give the said stag as small a show as possible.

If memory serves aptly as to figures, there were shipped one year from Maine, subject to the game laws, not less than five thousand two hundred and eighty-three carcasses of white-tailed deer, not counting those consumed within the state. The deer-license fund of Maine annually makes an enormous sum, itself only a tithe of the money spent in the state by deerhunters. Indeed, in Maine, New Brunswick, and Ontario, moose and deer are regarded as valuable state resources. In all the states of the Union that have deer, stiff license fees are exacted from residents and non-residents; and few states allow the shipment of more than one deer—that one to be accompanied by the killer of it. The day of five-cent venison is gone, and in these days a deer is a deer.

Yet, keen as has been the chase of the stag all these centuries, and increasingly efficient as have become all the agencies employed against him, the white-tailed deer of America at least holds his own astonishingly well. There are more deer in Maine and New Brunswick than there were twenty years ago. The hunting areas of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota are now more restricted, but the current season shows the stock of deer about as large

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as ever. Indeed, there are more deer now in these states than there were when lumbering operations were at their height and most of the camps were fed on venison.

The marketing of venison in the cities has become a far more difficult proposition, and the bag limit has been cut down. Given any kind of a chance the Virginia deer will take care of itself. Naturalists rank the species with the bob-white quail and the black bear in ability to fend for itself in a semi-civilized country.

Nearly every man who hunts at all has had dreams from his youth up of killing a deer some time. He pictures the whole thing out to himself, and always makes himself out a hero in the experience. Sometimes he lives to see his deer—perhaps to kill him—and sometimes he is not much of a hero; but, whether or not he does or is, he holds this well-nigh universal human ambition, that of some time slaying one of the wariest and noblest creatures of the wilderness, a stag. Mostly his stag is a doe.

There is no animal more intimately mingled with hunting romance or hunting traditions—none which serves more to set a hunter's blood a-tingle. Perhaps there is more excitement about deer hunting than any other kind of big-game hunting.

For instance, I have killed many bears of all

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sorts; but, though I have not cared for many years to kill a deer, a recent hunt developed the fact that there is fully as much nervous jolt in seeing a good, big deer as there is in meeting a bear, though the two sensations are entirely different. Perhaps it is the great alertness, beauty, power, and speed of the deer that make the hunter's blood start and his eyes shine eagerly. Getting your bear after you see him is rather more of a business undertaking. In any case the zest of hunting the deer is centuries old, and is still as keen as ever.

As showing the popularity of the sport of deer-hunting, it is estimated that there were between forty thousand and sixty thousand deerhunters out in Wisconsin alone last season; the figures are hard to obtain with exactness. Express cars coming down out of the pine woods in the month of November sometimes are packed almost full of deer carcasses—not so many now as when two or three deer might legally be exported, but still hundreds and hundreds in the total.

So it seems we Americans may still enjoy in goodly numbers the ancient and royal sport of hunting deer. We should be able always to enjoy it, did we look upon the matter in a businesslike way and refrain from killing all the deer we could at all possible times. The likelihood is that in view of

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the great interest that attaches to this splendid game creature, measures will be taken at an early date to prevent its extermination. State preserves, private preserves, interstate commerce laws, local game laws, and, best of all, a public sentiment back of these laws, will very likely conspire to leave us the Virginia deer for many decades—let us hope for many centuries—to come.

The most curious phenomenon of our deerhunting today is the fact that literally armies of hunters of all sorts, rich and poor, go out each fall for deer.

The fall hunt is not so much a business proposition in the South as in the North, but in much of the pine wilderness of the North it comes near to being made a business; and the sport in its different phases has been brought to a high degree of efficiency.

There are several ways of hunting the white-tailed deer, varying with the conditions of the country where it is found. In the South dogs are still used in the canebrakes, though hounding is prohibited by law in the states of the North. The shotgun is used in the South, but not in the North. In some parts of the South, "breasting deer" is practiced, a party of horsemen in line driving them out of their cover in the grass. I once had keen sport coursing deer in the old Indian Territory with

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greyhounds—and it took a bit of riding to see a finish there.

Watching for a deer on a runway or at a salt-lick has been known to be successful, and more than one camp cook has made a deer-lick out of a pork barrel. “Shining” deer by jack-light in the summertime round the edges of lakes or streams is perhaps the most abominable of all ways of being lawless.

As deer are hunted today on the big camp-hunts of the North, the two commonest forms of the sport are drying and still-hunting. The latter is more difficult, the former perhaps more generally successful. Indeed, most of the deer killed in the woods are driven to the gun either by intent or accident. When the big influx of hunters begins on the opening day the deer are disturbed and run about a great deal—more than they would normally, even in the rutting season; so that a man passing across the country or sitting by some runway may now and then get an unearned shot at a deer that has been driven by some one else.

It seems to be the custom now for men to go deerhunting in large parties. The railroads used to solicit communities for deerhunting parties. One morning at a Wisconsin town a hundred and sixty-five deerhunters, all from Ohio and Indiana, stepped casually off the train. In most of this Northern



Flashlight Photograph by Roy Chapman Andrews.

NIGHT LIFE IN THE FOREST

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country large camps, each with its own cook, locate here and there, either in big tents or in abandoned logging camps. With so many men in camp the drive is the most natural fashion of hunting, though in order to practice it successfully the leader must have a good knowledge of the country. Of course, if only two or three men are out still-hunting, very often a little drive will be made, one man going through a clump of bushes while the others wait on the farther edge. Little or big, the principle of the drive is the same.

Deer move about, like all other wild animals, mostly in the morning or in the evening; in the day-time they lie under cover. As dawn approaches they are ready to start out at any small alarm, so that is the best time to make a drive. Suppose we have a spruce thicket shot through with second growth or crossed by a cedar swamp, making a heavy cover half a mile or a mile across. If much of the surrounding country is more or less open this thicket is apt to conceal several deer. To drive them out is really a very cruel thing to the hunters who make the drive, for they will be obliged to get up at about four o'clock in the morning, eat a breakfast by candlelight, and walk or ride in the dark—perhaps several miles—to the appointed cover.

The drive is very often made against the wind,

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but much depends upon the lay of the country. Before the drivers begin their work they allow plenty of time—perhaps half an hour or more—for the hunters to take their stands on the farther side of the thicket. Each man gets on top of some eminence, so that he may shoot down and not across the country. A good stand is a hill at the edge of some marsh, where a path leads out of the thicket. A driven deer will not always stick to his runway, but he is most apt to pass out at some gap of the high country surrounding the thicket. The hunter on stand usually gets on top of a high stump, so that he can cover as much country as possible—say, two hundred yards on each side. He ought to be at his station as soon as it is light enough to shoot, though several drives may be made later in the day.

The sound of a shot puts every station man on his feet, eagerly watching his edge of the cover. Perhaps, long before he hears the voices of the beaters approaching, he may hear the faintest snapping of a twig and wonder whether it is the work of the wind, a bird or a deer. Then all at once, perhaps, ghostlike—not with any sudden crashing burst of speed, but gently, easily, silently, astonishingly gracefully—a deer breaks cover before him or at one side, you never can tell just how or where or

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when. That is the hunter's chance. If he does not kill he is sure to be disliked by all the rest of the hunting pack.

It is not difficult to hit a running deer, and few deer are killed standing. As a deer breaks from cover it does not seem to be very much alarmed. It may pause, look back, and trot or lope slowly ahead. If much alarmed it will run steadily, alternating low jumps with very high ones; but it rarely has the steady speed of the antelope in open country. There are all sorts of chances that interfere with the shot, but if you have two or three seconds of sight at a deer inside of a hundred and fifty yards he ought to be your deer.

The sense of scent in the deer is very acute; and as it runs into the wind it is on the alert to catch any scent of danger ahead. Hence the value of an elevated position, for then the deer will not scent you so readily, if at all. Guides say a deer will not smell you if you are eight feet above it. Also a running deer will not see you if you move, though your slightest movement will be detected by a standing deer.

In any case, when you see your deer you have your chance; and you must fire promptly, being careful not to shoot over the rim of the next hill, endangering the life of another watcher or one of

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the drivers. Shoot downhill or into the flank of the next hill—never into the free air.

The height of the art is to kill your deer clean with your first or second shot; but as a matter of fact, in actual hunting conditions, most amateurs worry down their deer in the chance-medley, hap-hazard work of rapid rifle fire. In some way they get the range better after a while.

The common cause of missing is, of course, over-shooting. Here comes in the astonishing faculty a buck deer has for disturbing the entire nervous system of an able-bodied man. Unless he has the coolness of the natural hunter he is apt to bang away without getting down into his hind sight. This is why as many deer are wounded as are killed. Of course, a hunter with cold nerve does not take all sorts of chances; but if a deer passes him in good view under a hundred and fifty yards he simply kills it—that is all. The man who gets rattled will miss many shots at forty or fifty yards—and have many of them to miss too; for sometimes a deer will break cover astonishingly close at hand.

Watching for deer on a stand at dawn of a November morning in the North is cold work, the more so since it is forbidden to move round very much. If the top of your stump seems cold you might cover it with a bunch of dried fern or bracken. A hunter

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has been known to take along a felt pad for this same purpose; and it is not a bad idea. A mackinaw coat over all, a buckskin shirt underneath, then a waistcoat, a heavy flannel shirt, and one or two wool undershirts are none too much clothing sometimes.

Today, of course, the hunter should always wear a red hat or cap. If he has none he certainly should pin a red handkerchief on top of his hat. Another red handkerchief about his neck or down his back is all the better. Some wear red sweaters or scarlet coats. In short, whereas the deer-hunter once sought to blend the color of his raiment with that of surrounding Nature, he now does the reverse as much as possible. These bright colors do not prevent success in deer hunting. I have seen a party of thirty men so accoutered, and each one went out with his deer in less than ten days after entering the woods.

Do not fail to have the red hat. There are many hunters who are anxious not to hurt you, and you should aid them as much as possible. In the course of the day you may hear a hundred shots fired by all sorts of men. In a recent hunt a young man was shot and killed within two miles of our hunting ground. Another man was shot through the wrist. Twelve men were killed the first week

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of the Wisconsin season. These things speak for red hats.

So clad, alone in the curious, still, soft gray diffused light of the dawn, the chill leaves your true hunter's heart when he hears across the forest that most stirring of all hunting sounds—the crisp, sharp crack of a rifle. When you hear it you wonder what luck the shooter had, what luck you are going to have if his luck has been bad and the game happens to come your way. Perhaps, if you are an amateur, you fidget a bit, and look through your rifle-sights and wonder if you are going to miss.

It is far better not to miss. Your friends will be polite about it; but the truth is the whole hunt hates a man who misses after enjoying the product of the whole machinery of a drive in which perhaps a dozen men are enlisted. It behooves you to draw fine and take that second sight, not to blaze away as you would at quail with a shotgun.

In good deer country a well-planned drive will usually turn out a deer or two, and one or all will be apt to be killed if the party is made up of experts. A great many deerhunting parties hang together year after year, and there is a sort of weeding-out process that eliminates poor shots and men of jumpy nerves. The writer has known half a dozen deer to be killed in a day by a well-organized driving party.

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This method probably accounts for three-fourths of the deer killed in the Northern hunting grounds these days.

The still-hunter plays a different game. He hunts alone, or with perhaps a single companion, both absolutely refraining from speech; and he has his greatest expectations in the early morning or late evening. He passes across his chosen country slowly, stopping sometimes, waiting and looking about. If he knows there is a big drive going on somewhere within a few miles he feels it is just as well to be in a place where he can intercept any deer that are driven out of cover. As is the case with the drive, his style of sport is something of a gamble; but it is a gamble in which success comes to the skillful man. You cannot blunder through the woods, rushing up to the top of one ridge after another and paying no attention to the direction of the wind, and have any just hope of getting your deer.

A tracking snow is always coveted by the still hunter; and the highest form of his art is to follow a big, selected buck mile after mile, to come on him lying down—to jump him and then kill him. Not every man can do this, but it can be done by the man who knows all the angles of his business. When you have killed a buck in that way you

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are apt to value it more than one killed on a drive.

Small parties of deerhunters—especially those not well acquainted with their chosen country—usually do still-hunting and not driving. Of course, they run across many deer started by other hunters scattered all over the country, but the habit of continual alertness and silence remains of utmost value just the same. Sometimes tracks in the sand or snow of a path will show the still hunter that he is at a good deer-crossing. Perhaps, even, he may find a double runway—two deerpaths crossing—and so double his chances of a shot.

It will do no harm for him to sit a while, silent and motionless, near to some such spot. He is more apt to get a deer in this way than by pushing round in the bush. It is dull and rather lonesome work, but it has the law of averages solidly behind it—especially if there are very many other hunters knocking around in the country.

There are few rules for deerstalking beyond those of care and silence, though books have been written on the art. You see your deer usually when you are not expecting him; you shoot, and perhaps you kill—that is the story of seventy-five per cent of the deer killed. Of course, when you do see your deer you must take your chance promptly, for

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white-tailed deer are not so abundant as rabbits, and it may be days before you get another shot.

Remember, therefore, two things—to get down in the back sight and to get well forward on your deer. With a black-powder rifle one had to hold well ahead of the deer if running; but that is not necessary with the high-power rifle of today. Not long ago I killed a running deer at two hundred and fifty yards. It was shot through the shoulders, yet the aim was just at the front edge of the body and barely inside the hair line. With the rifle, as with the shotgun, the more swing the less lead. The shoulder shot, of course, is the best. A shot far back in the body cripples and loses many and many a good deer—more's the pity!

When your deer is down be sure it is down for keeps. Stay on top of your stump, where you can see it, until you are sure it is dead. The next thing is to bleed your deer. Of course you know that the sticking place—so-called—is at the base of the neck. You should sever the large bloodvessels there and also the windpipe. Drag the deer so that it will lie with its head down hill if possible. You may then finish the rest of the work if you do not rely wholly upon your guide—as so many do who ought not to. Let it bleed well, then pull it round with its head uphill.

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In cleaning a deer many or perhaps most men rip it full length from neck to tail. That is not the best way, for it allows dirt to get into the cavity and makes the carcass harder to handle well. The correct way is to cut entirely free round the vent, so that the rectal tract is entirely freed from all attachment. Leave it then, and do not split down between the hind legs at all. Go into the abdomen well ahead of the hind legs, and open the body forward only to the edge of the ribs. Now you have all the viscera freed at each end, since you already have cut off the windpipe; and with a little cutting at the liver and tearing at the heart and lights—which will bloody your arms above the elbows, very likely—you can bring out all the viscera at once and still leave the body of the deer clean, not mussed up, and not very much disfigured. Be careful not to cut your hands with your knife while feeling round inside.

To get a big deer out of the woods is a hard job for two strong men. If you are coming for your deer soon you do not need even to hang it up, but it is best to do so. The common way is to pierce the gambrels with a crosspiece and swing it up by the hind legs; but a deer will keep better and drain better and shed the weather better if hung up by the nose or neck. If you have to drag your deer

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out to a trail hang it up there. If you leave it in the bush have a blazed trail so you will be able to find it again. Better pull out a green branch or so into the road at the point where your blazed trail strikes it; then you can find your deer later when you have a wagon or other means of taking it out of the woods.

A deer can easily be brought out of the woods on a horse; the better if the latter has a cow-saddle with a good horn. Cut slits for thongs above the hocks and knees, and cut another slit along the brisket. Let two or more men pick up the deer and, approaching the horse very carefully, drop it into the saddle in such a way that the horn sticks through the slit brisket. Now tie down the legs at their middle joints to the cinch-ring on each side. Your deer will be on to stay if you have been thoughtful enough to cinch your saddle tightly in advance. If you forget this you are apt to have a ruined deer and a ruined horse. Few horses will pack a deer, and even Indian ponies sometimes have to be blind-folded while the deer is being loaded on the saddle.

Most deerhunters wagon their supplies into camp and then go out on foot for their hunting, horses rarely being used. The writer was one of a very interesting and highly efficient hunting party in Wisconsin during the past season. We had a dozen

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or more Indian ponies—stolid, rational little brutes, which could carry weight and which never got excited in any situation. Our hunt had rather a Scotch Highlands flavor, for we packed in all our deer on pony back. It was a goodly sight to see three or four ponies, each with his deer, plodding patiently along the homeward trail in the evening.

One man collected three deer on two ponies one day. On yet another day a pony with a deer lashed to him got away in the bush and was lost for some hours, only to be found in camp at dusk, patiently waiting to be unloaded. With our pony train, a number of automatic rifles, big log camps, a good cook, good guides, and a leader perfectly acquainted with the country through many years' hunting there, we had the most perfect example of deadly efficient, wholly comfortable, modern deerhunting I ever saw. Though we did not catch them in nets as they did in ancient Germany, or drive them through chutes past the firing stand, we got them just the same; which seems to be the *raison d'être* of all deer hunts.

Even in camp your deer is not yet home. You tie in his ear the first coupon from your hunting license, which, maybe, cost you twenty-five dollars. At the railroad station the agent ties on another coupon. Then he tears off another coupon and

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sends it to the state game warden. You weigh your deer, pay the expressage on it, and then accompany it home on the same train. By the time you get it home to your city and carry it home in a taxicab, and then tip the butcher to hang it up for you in his icehouse, you are approaching the closing scenes of a deerhunt today.

XII

GAME LAWS AND GAME SUPPLY

XII

GAME LAWS AND GAME SUPPLY

AT a recent meeting of a club of big-game hunters in an Eastern city, a small band of Blackfoot Indians furnished a part of the evening's entertainment by giving some of their tribal songs and dances. They were professional Indians, so to speak, employed by a railroad for advertising purposes. Another part of the entertainment of the evening was a series of moving pictures and stereopticon views from the West.

One of these views, apparently a colored reproduction of one of the Catlin paintings, showed a hunting scene—an Indian running a buffalo and shooting it with bow and arrow. When this life-size picture was flashed on the screen every one of the Blackfeet gave a wild whoop of joy. It took them all back to the old days of the buffalo, days that the Indian has never forgotten.

Curiously enough, on the morning following this incident there came to the desk of the writer a clipping from a Kansas City newspaper which some-

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times prints news taken from its own files of a date forty years earlier. The date in question puts us back in the time of 1873. There are three curiosities in this bit of reprint. One is the following advertisement:

“Gentlemen’s heavy shawls, worth \$5; now \$3.50.”

Gentlemen wear overcoats today and not shawls. If you can remember the days when men wore shawls you can remember the buffalo. Two other items read as below:

“One of the Kansas City party of mighty hunters who went out into the Dodge City region after buffaloes a few weeks ago writes to the *Times* as follows: ‘We have been out only thirteen days, traveling about twenty miles a day, and we have killed thirty-one buffaloes, seven antelopes, one deer, one badger, two gray wolves and one coyote, all of which, except the buffaloes and antelopes, we skinned and brought in.’ ”

“Prairie chickens have gone up to two dollars and quails to seventy-five cents a dozen; but you can get plenty of buffalo meat at three to five cents, antelope at six to seven cents, and venison at six

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to eight cents a pound, as well as wild ducks at one dollar to one dollar and a half a dozen and wild geese at forty to sixty cents a dozen."

If you wish a definite comparison in the way of game supplies of the past and present, consult the current market lists. It would be somewhat difficult today to purchase wild geese at even the maximum price above quoted—sixty cents a dozen. What a world of change in the wild life of America there has been in the past forty years!

And yet, just to show what might have been done—in part at least—witness another newspaper clipping, from Plains, Montana, bearing the date of December 26, 1913:

"Plains witnessed the shipment of a car of buffaloes last Saturday. A bunch of ten were driven down by Charles Allard and his crew, and four were shipped to Butte, one bought here by C. H. Rittenour, of the McGowan Commercial Company, and the balance herded back to the range. The animals were all in fine condition. The one retained was a cow weighing six hundred pounds, which has been butchered, and the meat is being retailed. It is to the credit of Mr. Rittenour that no advance was made in the price of this choice meat to the consumers, the McGowan Company re-

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tailing it at current beef prices. Down in Butte this meat sells round fifty cents a pound."

There would seem to be no reason to doubt the accuracy of the foregoing; and, indeed, Christmas buffalo meat has long been more than a semi-occasional novelty in the West. When the Canadian Government purchased the Pablo-Allard herd of buffaloes of the Flathead Reservation it was found impossible to round up and collect all the buffaloes. Occasionally, since then, some of the old bulls have been killed; and now, it seems, the owner does not hesitate to sacrifice even a cow of the species.

In any case Allard grew weary of being the practical protector of the species when our own Government refused to buy his buffaloes and allowed them to be shipped outside this country. These specimens are the fag-ends of the largest herds of buffalo left alive in our own Republic. There would have been no difficulty in raising large numbers of them under government care in this country, just as has been done in the Canadian herd at Wainwright, where some hundreds of calves are now born annually, and where there is increase ready for sale or other distribution.

In this country every man is as good as his neighbor—and a little better. We all of us feel entitled

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to special privileges, to the extent of having just what we want. As to the other fellow, he feels precisely as we do about special privileges. Obviously anything—even a law of the United States—which interferes with anyone's special privilege is "unconstitutional."

State laws in the ancient warden system have long ago been accepted as practically worthless in the protection of our game. Under this system we have seen our game disappear almost in geometrical progression year by year; and its disappearance is the answer to the state game warden system. The difference between sixty cents a dozen for wild geese and, say, six dollars each for wild geese is something fairly to be called a measure of the game warden system of the United States.

When it comes down to adequate analysis of this whole question of open shooting in America, the thing simply resolves itself into that ancient proposition of special privilege. For a long time you could get away with special privilege in America; but that day has gone by or is passing. The trouble with some of us is that we cannot realize that it has gone by, and that we still want to live in the good old times when it was fashionable to kill a man if we did not like the color of his hair. All sorts of men, from all parts of the country, are

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wailing against the iniquity of anything which restricts them in their pleasure. All sorts of arguments are used, most of them no more than assertions.

For instance, one man explains that it is not the shooting which has killed American game, but "advancing civilization." That commentator overlooks the extinction of the buffalo, the early extinction of the elk, the bighorn and other large game animals; and overlooks also the millions of head of wild game marketed in our great cities. Presumably he thinks these animals were not shot, but merely died from contact with civilization. To a dispassionate reasoner the result would seem much the same in each case.

The most naïve and artless statement at hand—covering this question of special privilege—comes from a Western state, where some of the shooters, by reason of local conditions, appear to be deprived by Federal statute of part or most of the shooting to which they have been accustomed in the past. Since the argument advanced is about as frank and about as empty as those from any other source, it may perhaps be well—just for once—to quote part of this special plea for special privilege:

"On the question of migratory birds permit us to view it from the practical standpoint of those situated in the middle section of our country. Dur-

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ing the fall of the year there is practically no water in our lakes; in fact, after a drought like that of 1913 there is not one lake in ten in our middle section that contains any water whatever. On an average we do not have sufficient water for fall shooting more than one year out of five, and it is well known that ducks and geese will not stop unless there is water. In addition, the progress that is being made in ditching, draining, and reclaiming our swamp and overflow lands, as well as lakes, is greatly reducing the area of the hunting grounds in the middle section.

“Our so-called spring shooting—that is, from February fifteenth to April first—is not only by far the best shooting but in a great majority of cases is the only time in which we have water sufficient in quantity to attract the attention of the migratory birds, this water coming from the melting of the snow and the overflows following the winter freezes. And will someone please explain the difference in killing a duck in Missouri during February and killing one in Texas or Louisiana during February?

“The ducks and geese on their travels northward in the spring of the year, coming through this section during February and March, are not mating, and travel in the same way they do in the fall of the

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year going south; and why the argument that they could be shot in the fall and not in the spring in this section of the country is more than the writer can understand, as we might as well prohibit the shooting on the Gulf Coast in December, January and February as to prohibit it in this section during February and March.

“Is it not a restriction of the individual rights and liberties of a resident of Missouri, Iowa or Kansas, who perchance may have a small lake or pond on his premises, when a flight of ducks going north in February or March drops down on this lake or pond, to say that this farmer shall not have the right to shoot at them? When they get up and leave they are gone for good, and if he cannot shoot at them then he never gets the chance; but, on the contrary, they are exposed to be killed by the Canadian Indian or the well-to-do sportsman who can afford to visit the winter feeding grounds of such game on the Gulf Coast.

“It is not, therefore, a question of whether some one sportsman, or some gun club or private game preserve, shall have little or no shooting at all, but is simply a question of whether the rich man, who can afford to make long trips in quest of such game, shall have practically the exclusive privilege—because, if it is a fact that the average hunter in the

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middle section of the country be not permitted to shoot geese and ducks during the passage, there will be more at the summer or winter quarters of these fowls where the rich and lordly sportsman goes, and it would thereby make more game for him. The foregoing assertion is made on the theory that the discontinuance of spring shooting in this section will increase the supply.

"The Canadian Government furnishes very little and in some sections no protection of the wildfowl bred and raised on its own ground; and is it the duty of this Government to protect that which is raised in another country? Shall our citizenship of the middle section be deprived of that to which they are as much entitled as the citizenship of any section? And shall we be responsible for the care, keeping and protection of the migratory birds for the benefit of the Gulf sportsmen and the residents of Canada?"

Information is much more appreciated by most folk who read than argument or assertion or harsh criticism. It is usually the part of youth to be caustic in comment on the opinions of others which do not agree with our own. There is no wish herein to be harsh, for no good comes of that sort of thing.

At the same time there is no need to be otherwise

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than candid or sane in looking into these matters. It is plain that the slightest study of this Western plea for special privilege will disclose its logic to have absurd premises and a faulty conclusion. It is just plain, everyday, naïve selfishness, nothing more. It wholly forgets that all laws are compromises, but that all laws are made to protect the public against individual selfishness. It assumes that the law should protect the spring shooter, and not the wild-fowl. Such a protest is not even high-class nonsense—it is mere puerile babbling. Just that much can be said of every other argument for special privilege. Should we grant equal rights of exemption to every other locality of the United States affected by the Federal wildfowl statute, we should have no law at all—and no game at all.

The trouble with all special privilege is that it lands us precisely in the middle of general anarchy and general destruction, of general emptiness and want. If it were not for these disconcerting features special privilege would be an excellent thing, whether in Wall Street, in the United States Senate, or on a ducking marsh.

Without doubt or question, the sentiment of the American people is turning against special privilege. We are beginning to unscramble the eggs. We are revising some of the special privilege clauses of

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the tariff; restricting some of the special privileges of the currency; taking other steps which seem to show that we are counting over what we have left in America. We must come to the same frame of mind in sport that we have attained—partially, at least—in commerce. In short, if we are to have any sport in America we have got to handle it on a strictly business basis.

Most of this protest against the wildfowl law arises not from downtrodden persons, but over on-trodden toes. It is frank and selfish jealousy that animates the special plea for the Middle West shooter. It is perfectly easy to see that in abolishing spring shooting and establishing new shooting zones in the United States, someone's toes are going to get stepped on. It is equally easy to see that someone's toes should have been stepped on long ago.

Compromise has to begin somewhere. We can eat our cake, or keep it, or we can partly eat it and partly keep it; but we cannot eat it all and have any of it left. There are many men in this country today who are trying to get the question of American game supply handled on a business basis and not a special privilege basis, and who are not thinking of their own personal interests in the least.

More convincing than mere assertions are facts

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fresh from the game fields. It cannot be doubted that the series of such facts today have one unmistakable trend—and that is the recording of general scarcity of game. A writer from South Dakota, who has been accustomed to shooting in good wild-fowl country, says:

“It might be of interest to state that there was not any great flight of Northern birds this fall and a scarcity of the mallards was specially noticeable. Though the lakes and ponds have all been open—except in one light freeze about October twenty-second—until this writing, and though the weather has been extremely mild, with no snow, the late mallards are in evidence only in small numbers. With the above conditions prevalent a few years ago, our grainfields in the neighborhood of the small lakes would be alive with big northern greenheads. Have they changed their flight, as some of our hunters contend, or are there less bred each year? I am quite anxious to see what effect the cutting out of spring shooting will have on the fall flight. It is my belief that little if any change will be apparent for several years; and, though it almost breaks my heart to think that I shall not be able to hike out next spring when the flight from the South begins, I am glad to sacrifice this pleasure in the spring in

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order to help save our wild birds from seeming extermination."

Once in a while a marked uneasiness becomes apparent among certain protesters against our Federal wildfowl law, lest we should be doing too much for Canada and Canada not enough for us, in this matter of migratory fowl. That is the same dog-in-the-manger attitude which for a long time kept Wisconsin from passing a spring-shooting law—because Illinois had not done so. Such jealous propositions have nothing to do with practical game protection; but, so far as that is concerned, Canada is fully abreast of us in protecting wildfowl. A communication from an official of a protective association at Regina, Saskatchewan, says:

"I agree that more ducks breed in the southern part of Saskatchewan than in the northern. Johnston Lake, forty miles south of our lower railroad line, is one of the best breeding grounds I have seen in Saskatchewan. A small island there has been made a game preserve. Saskatchewan abolished spring shooting three years ago, and Manitoba and Alberta have since fallen into line. British Columbia still allows spring shooting, but we hope to see that province fall into line with the other states and provinces. . . . We have this year put a bag limit

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of two hundred and fifty—inclusive—on ducks, geese and swans, which practically eliminates the market hunter."

Canada more rigidly enforces her game laws than we do in the United States. She still has more game than we have, being younger; hence her laws might be more liberal than ours. It is time for all Canada, however, to prohibit not only all spring shooting but all market shooting all the time. So far from the limit of two hundred and fifty birds wiping out the market hunter, the writer has at hand advices from an American sportsman who shot in Saskatchewan last fall and who there knew one market shooter who had marketed twenty-five hundred wild ducks that season. There are just a few of us who do not identify the market hunter with civilization in its highest sense.

From a city in Alberta there comes word from a sportsman who has given some study to the question of game supply; and his report, on the whole, seems optimistic and broad gauged:

"The wildfowl of this continent are going—and going fast. I have done considerable shooting in Western Canada, from Winnipeg to the mountains and from the international boundary to fifty-five

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north latitude, for the past twenty-two years, and can assure you that not one bird exists today among the migratory families where ten came and went two decades ago.

“There are many reasons for this apart from the winter and spring shooting. The nesting grounds have been settled, and lakes where wild celery was prolific a few years ago are barren of it now—simply pastured to death, I presume, owing to the curtailment of the feeding grounds. The recurrent disappearance of the rabbits forces the coyotes to hunt other food, and duck eggs are very much to their liking. Then numerous small sloughs, formerly having—every one—their three or four broods of ducks, have disappeared before the plow. Out-of-season shooting has made the more wary wild ducks avoid entirely great stretches of country.

“I can assure you that the game laws are pretty well observed throughout Western Canada. Our open season for ducks is pretty short and after this year is likely to be two or three weeks shorter, not opening possibly until September fifteenth. This will make it very little over a month, when you consider that our sloughs ice over usually in the latter half of October and the ducks move south.

“This year, in my immediate home neighborhood, ducks were so plentiful through September

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and early October that they were a curse to the farmer. They fed on the fields in hordes, and I can mention farmers who lost as high as a third of their grain in the stock. I know of a field or two that were worthless and were never even threshed; but this condition was quite local. The trips I made a hundred miles east, and even less south and west, showed an absolute scarcity of wildfowl. The ducks come where feed is abundant and convenient to open water. Still, it sounds strange to hear in 1913 of a farmer having to hire a man to patrol his grain fields in the evening and morning to protect them from wild ducks.

"Our grouse—mislabeled prairie chickens—and partridges are very much on the increase, owing partly to the absolute protection afforded them by the Province of Alberta for some years; they are getting so numerous, in fact, that the open season was extended a month this year on grouse. They were doing damage to cut grain—not to mention the quantity of seed they scratch out of the ground in the seeding season. Being non-migratory, of course it is up to us to retain them or exterminate them; but, if the general attitude of our people toward the close season placed on them a few years ago is to be taken as a criterion of our wish to conserve the species, it will be a long time before

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the broadminded sportsman will not get his legal bag of ten birds in a day's shooting. I have counted as high as seven hundred grouse flushed out of a single grain field this fall, and we see them everywhere while motoring along the country roads.

"Your timely article on wildfowl has brought me to write this letter. I hope that judicious treatment of the subject by the authorities on both sides of the line will make it possible for an honest, decent shooter to get a reasonable bag for his day's hunt for generations to come."

Too many times sportsmen have reasoned from a particular premise to a general conclusion. The fact that ducks have to be herded off the fields in one locality in Alberta does not mean that American gunners ought to shoot in the spring in any of our Western states. The fact that some localities are specially favored with game does not mean that men of those localities should kill it without restriction; nor does it mean that men of less favored localities should use to the limit their own lessening opportunities. That a few men shoot ducks on the Gulf Coast in December and January does not by any means signify that all men should shoot ducks in March and April in the entire Mississippi Valley.

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What these facts do mean, if we apply to them the tests of logic or plain North American horse sense, is that the day of special privilege is due to pass on this continent, and is now passing; and that it must be entirely past before the laws of democracy and decent fair play can be put in force. We must give a little in one place and take a little in another.

No game law ever was popular; but wide and logical game laws must be put in force all over this continent if we are to have any supply of game left. Some toes will be trodden on without doubt or question. It is best just to look pleasant in that case. We all of us have to take our medicine sometimes. Unless our Constitution is unconstitutional, our scheme of government—here in the United States, at least—has in view the greatest good to the greatest number.

We must begin to look at the supply of game not from a purely local and selfish standpoint, but from an economic, educational, and industrial standpoint. We must apply business principles to our sport. We have got to look on our game crop as one to be harvested under certain wise restrictions—just as the farmer harvests his poultry.

So far as open shooting for the average American is concerned, that means, without doubt or question, that we must reconcile ourselves to the thought

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of shorter shooting seasons, of smaller daily bags, of no spring shooting and no market shooting.

We soon shall see the time, let us hope, when there will be no market shooting and no spring shooting from the Gulf of Mexico to Athabasca Lake. That will mean that more people will eat more wild fowl in more places than they do today. That is business! The curtailment of the personal enjoyment of a few of us is something that does not really come into the question one way or the other.

Special privilege would be an excellent thing if we all could have it—but we can not. You can not buy geese for sixty cents a dozen today.

XIII

A VOYAGE AROUND THE ROOM

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IT is not given to all of us to visit foreign lands, or to know the wilderness regions of all the world, but sometimes quite a voyage around the world may be taken within the confines of an average sportsman's den. Outdoor men are natural collectors, and nearly every hunter of your acquaintance will have a lot of mounted heads and rugs, an assortment of all kinds of rifles and guns, and countless curious knickknacks which he has accumulated from year to year in uncivilized portions of the globe. Your real sportsman is nothing if not impractical. Ask him why he picks up this worthless plunder, and probably he could not tell you. The things just naturally seem to stick to him.

In any one of a dozen lodges, dens, or junk rooms—whatever you choose to call this *sanctum sanctorum* of the outdoor crank—you may perhaps, when you come to investigate, run across a liberal education in some phases of outdoor life, so that

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perhaps the voyage around the room may in effect be a voyage around the world.

There is some connection between a love of the outdoor air and a love for the early history of this country. You will find a great many well-to-do sportsmen who have fine libraries on early Americans—and very likely fine libraries of natural history as well. There is an enormous literature of the outdoors, covering a wide and interesting world quite unknown to those not embraced in the great guild of the lovers of the open. Many and many an old volume, rare and valuable, we shall find thus tucked away, its owner ashamed to admit his weakness for early exploration and adventure, or even for the early history of his own country. So many men pooh-pooh that sort of thing that the culprits feel always on the defensive. Perhaps also they will not care to show you their own collections of pictures, taken here and there all over the world, things certain to be of value at a later day, but classed as junk by contemptuous contemporaries, who do not understand.

In an earlier day in our country, a gentleman was supposed to know how to ride, shoot, and tell the truth. His familiarity with weapons was a matter of course. Other times, other customs! It is not so necessary today for a gentleman to know about

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such things, but though not necessary, nevertheless it may be quite as desirable.

When it comes to firearms today, you shall see many a man, owner of more sorts and conditions of firearms than his grandfather would have dreamed of having about him. It is a day of science and progress in weapons. We care little for the means of increasing and preserving the wild life of our country, but as to things for killing off the game, we are equipped as no other people in the world ever have been.

Among the rifles in your own den you have, no doubt, the latest high-power arms. If you were obliged to go out grizzly hunting with no better tools than those carried by Lewis and Clark, you probably would not go at all. Your own battery probably includes the heaviest repeating arms, and also the most modern high-power small bores.

In the old days neither white man nor red would have dreamed of owning such rifles as we have today. Here, for instance, is that quaint volume of tremendous lies written by old Jim Beckwourth, who lived among the Crow Indians in the early part of the last century. Beckwourth got so he could use a bow and arrow as well as an Indian. Here are a pair of old buffalo arrows hanging on the wall. The owner got them from old Plenty

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Coup, chief of the Crows. Plenty Coup said both of these arrows had killed buffalo in their time. I wonder if either of them ever was shot from a bow such as Beckwourth describes—that most prized one made from the horns of the mountain sheep.

Bows from the old plains, wrapped in sinew, made of elkhorn or of bois d'arc (the osage orange wood) are not uncommon even yet in sportsmen's dens, although they and the old war shields now have become museum pieces. How would you like to have to make a living with this bow from the Crows, or this other from the Piutes, and these arrows with heads peradventure filed out of hoop iron? Hardly as good as the modern Springfield, one would say. Yet with tools no better than these, Indians killed practically all kinds of American great game—even, sometimes, the grizzly bear.

There is something odd about the Indian bow, whether from the most northerly or southerly parts of the buffalo range. All the tribes made the bow with one side flatter than the other when the bow was strung. Why this form of the bow began and persisted I have never been able to figure out, but from Blackfoot to Digger you will see lack of symmetry in the two sides of the strung bow.

The savage hunter could not concern himself much over the trajectory of his projectiles, but

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had to do just the best he could with the means at hand. One of his devices for increasing the range of his spear was the throwing stick, a contrivance which has been found in Australia, North America, and other parts of the world among savage peoples. Here is one form of this contrivance which the Aleut hunter who owned it called a "nogock." It is a flattened stick a couple of feet long, grooved to give a good hold in the fingers, and fitted with a tip of ivory against which the bottom of the dart or harpoon rested. By this device he could lengthen his arm and cast his dart with tremendous velocity.

Here is something still rarer than the Aleut's nogock—that is to say, the harpoon or giant arrow which he used with the nogock. This weapon is about four feet long, is feathered like an Indian arrow, and has a long head, not of steel, but of slate. With no better tools, and with no better boat than the tipsy bidarka of seal hide, out of which you or I would fall as fast as we could climb in, the Aleut hunter went to sea after whales; and, moreover, he got whales.

Sneaking up on one of these great creatures when he found it on the surface, your Aleut would drive his slate-headed little harpoon deep into its body. He knew very well that if the stone head

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penetrated the blubber and struck into the red meat of the whale, death would certainly ensue eventually. So, having delivered his shaft, he paddled back home and waited until the dead whale came ashore somewhere and some time. It would puzzle us to duplicate his feat with the best of our modern rifles.

A rather curious interest attaches to the knives of savage peoples. Many sportsmen have collected sets of the Philippine weapons, from barong and bolo to kris and dagger. The coarse gray steel of these great knives will take quite a good edge. The nearest approach we have to these heavy blades is the old Hudson Bay knife, with its wide, heavy blade and stout handle, a weapon and tool combined, which would weigh two or three pounds.

Perhaps you have read that the Chinese will saw or whittle toward himself and not away from himself while working wood. Some of the tribes of the extreme northern parts of this continent are curiously Oriental in their looks and in their habits. All over the North you will find what is known as the "crooked knife," a tool usually made of an old file, with the end curved up, not used for cutting or stabbing. This knife was always drawn toward the user while whittling, and like all the Indian knives, was sharpened only on one side, and not with a double bevel.

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Among the Eskimos you will find a still more curious knife used in a still more curious way. The Eskimo has very little metal, and with him an old saw blade is a treasure. He also whittles toward himself, but the handle of his knife is so long that it rests in the hollow of his elbow when he works, thus getting a very rigid purchase. The blade is only two or three inches long, pointed and bent up, and sharpened on one side. With no better tool the Eskimo can fashion all sorts of things.

The Eskimo makes other knives out of chance bits of metal. These curious little blades, looking like hash knives, are really his hide scrapers, for he will always use steel rather than stone when he can get it. This semi-circular blade resembles a harness-maker's knife. The handle is of bone. It is not riveted, but you could hardly get it off if you tried. In some way he slits the bone, inserts the blade, and shrinks it on firmly.

With the rudest of tools some Eskimo has made this curious pipe out of bits of steel and pieces of copper cartridges. The bowl is very small, like the old stone pipe bowls. How the metal is inlaid so firmly and beautifully, in alternate bands of steel and copper, only the savage workman himself could explain. But perhaps still more difficult was the fashioning of this blue-stone pipe bowl, which the

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Eskimo had to drill through with the clumsiest of drills. Today the Eskimos make these drills with pieces of steel or tempered nails. They let a piece of copper cartridge into the upper part of the drill, which they hold between their teeth while working, and they operate the drill shaft with the ancient bow and thong which was discovered at no man knows what ancient day of the world.

As for you and me, if we want a weapon we can go down to the store and buy it. If we want a whole kit of tools we can buy them. If we want a knife we can choose from dozens of patterns. If we want ivory ornaments, we can buy them ready made, done by Chinese or Japanese or Siamese, and we do not have to decorate them as the Eskimo does, with the three-cornered point of a hardened nail let into a piece of ivory for a handle.

If we want to go fishing, we can go down town and get the most wonderful variety of fishing gear, ranging from cheap Cincinnati bass hooks to the splendid salmon flies which cost a couple of dollars apiece. We would call it something of a hardship to go out and get fish enough for breakfast if we had no better fishhook than this one made by some Eskimo on the Arctic sea. It is, indeed, a curious lure, about three inches long, made of a piece of ivory backed with a piece of black whalebone, and

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cut roughly into the shape of a minnow. The hook is simply a barbless piece of bent wire, fastened to one end and roughly curved. The savage maker has put two or three spots of metal on his lure, and has even reeved through it two pieces of red worsted, cut off on each side close to the surface. It is a far more sportsmanlike proposition than our wooden minnows with a dozen hooks in gangs hung all over them.

While fishing for the inconnu, or other fish of his country, Mr. Eskimo stands on the edge of the ice with a short stiff pole made, perhaps, of a piece of ivory or a seal rib, a foot or so in length. His line he has made of sinews or the like. He stands and bobs his curious bait up and down, and when he has a bite he snatches out his fish forthwith. Sometimes his fish will weigh ten to twenty or thirty pounds. His lure, which looks so simple to us, is practical in his hands. So is his ivory-tipped harpoon for hunting seal, and so is his shotgun for hunting wild ducks.

The latter is simply a half-dozen thongs tied together at one end, having ivory balls at the other. Whirling this over his head, he casts it revolving into a flock of flying birds, and in his hands it will bring home the bacon. This contrivance is something like the bolas used by the South American

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natives in their hunting. It is very curious to note how some of these aboriginal devices reappear in the most widely separated corners of the world.

I don't see why our enterprising sporting goods dealers do not offer hunters something in the way of a waterproof rifle case, not a leather carrying cover but something to protect the gun while actually hunting. Daniel Boone had a cover for his rifle, and so did Kit Carson, and so does the North American Indian from Dakota to the Arctic Ocean. These gun covers, usually made of moose leather and highly ornamented, are very fine examples of savage handiwork sometimes. They are not waterproof, however. Among the Aleutian Islands I have seen rifle covers made of canvas and painted in order to waterproof them, as that is a very wet country for hunting. The white man seems to have gotten out of the habit of carrying his rifle in a case while hunting, and contents himself with collecting savage rifle covers for use only in his den—very beautiful specimens they are, too, some of them.

It is a matter of wonder how these savages, living as rudely as they do, can turn out articles so beautifully decorated. I have seen Indian and Eskimo women sitting on the ground in the rawest kind of a cold wind, scarcely sheltered at all by the ragged tent or tepee, turning out the most beau-

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tiful things in silk work or bead work—gun covers, moccasins, baby bands or baby bags, museum pieces in every sense of the word and beautiful examples of savage handicraft. Once in a while, nowadays, these poor people get a little hand sewing machine, more is the pity, but for the most part their belongings are of the scantiest and most meager. The interior of an Indian tent is a jumble of articles of all sorts, but nearly always, underneath the bed, or in some bag, hidden under a pile of meat or hides, you will find some sort of pouch or contrivance in which every savage woman keeps her working tools and her treasures, skeins of silk or the pitiful strings of beads for which they pay so high a price.

The Indian trunk was the rawhide parfleche, a folded case in which to carry meat or almost anything else. I have never seen one of these cases in the moose country of the North, but usually the women up there will have some sort of box or tin, or a buckskin bag, in which they keep their odds and ends. From such a receptacle came this curious object, the use of which you might guess many times before you had it right. It is a roughly ornamented cylinder of metal, a quarter of an inch in diameter. Through it there plays loosely a buckskin thong which has a copper ball on one end and some beads and seal teeth at the other for ornament.

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This is the Eskimo lady's needle book, and she could not devise a better for her manner of life. She prizes her needles very much, indeed, and cannot afford to lose one. She sticks them into the soft buckskin thong lengthwise, slips the metal cylinder over them, and tucks the thong under her belt. So there she is, with her needles perfectly safe and where she can always get at them! Attached to the same cylinder you may perhaps find a thong carrying her three-cornered steel, made from an old file, which she uses to put an edge on her knife.

The Eskimos of the far North make waterproof coats out of the intestines of bears, or other large animals. The Aleut calls such a coat a "kamelinka." It turns rain perfectly. A coat of this kind packs into a small space. No white man can understand how few and meager are the personal belongings of these tribes who have to win their living from hostile Nature. They cannot carry much with them even if they had it to carry. For instance, you will not find many dishpans in an Eskimo village. Mother Eskimo takes a stone and pounds a hole in the ground and pours it full of water. This makes a very excellent dishpan, although the water is not changed very often.

Savage footwear is always an interesting study. No doubt in your youthful reading you learned that

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the old trapper could look at a moccasin and tell to what tribe it belonged. Indeed, within certain limitations, you can do that yourself today. The white man's influence has changed moccasin decoration in every tribe on this continent, so that it is very difficult now to get the really primitive beaded moccasin. These never had flowers or vines in the patterns, but always certain rude geometrical patterns, each of which had a certain symbolism to the savage mind. Scientists sometimes take delight in trying to read meanings into these old moccasins.

If you find a moccasin cut on a Waukenphast model, and with a hard, rawhide sole, you can depend on it that it was made by a teepee tribe of meat-eating Indians. All the plains tribes in the buffalo days wore hard-soled moccasins. They make them out of beef hide even yet, among the Crows, Cheyennes and Blackfeet. On the contrary, as you go north into the woods country where snow falls deep, you find the moccasins made pointed, usually with the seam straight down the upper, and with the sole of the same material as the uppers and flaps. You will be able to tell one woods tribe from another by the cut of the ankle flaps. The footwear of the snowshoe peoples was entirely different from that of the horse Indians.

The Northern tribes who live in the land of long

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night, dress gayly, use bright colors. There is a reason for this. White travelers say that in the monotony of nature, all white and black, the eye craves color, that it is a relief amounting almost to a safeguard against insanity. Hence the Indian woman spent much time in embroidering and beading moccasins, leggings, garters, gun covers, and the like. Sometimes she made beautiful fire bags, for ceremonial wear, in which the braves carried their pipes and tobacco—examples for which museums sometimes pay good prices today. I have one made by a Mandan woman, who was eighty years old when she did it, and almost the last one of her tribe. She was living then among the Blackfeet. Now, when you look at this little pouch of porcupine quills and beads, you ought not to toss it down idly or in contempt. It is a great thing. It takes you back into the history of this country in the time of the old fur trade along the Missouri—indeed, into the days of Lewis and Clark, the heroic times of exploration and adventure of which we like to read. Your sportsman's den may perhaps be a school and a library, as well as a receptacle for junk.

Sometimes one's sporting equipment will gain historic value even during one's own lifetime. For instance, here are two examples of the ancient Ken-

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tucky casting reels, each beautiful and delicate as a watch. There are all sorts of casting reels on sale today, from five dollars up. You paid twenty dollars for your old Kentucky reel and thought it too much, but it is worth fifty today. In the same way some of your old-fashioned rifles will run into value, and perhaps also your fishing rods as well. Today many of the articles of savage use, such as the old war shields, war shirts, buffalo bows, primitive examples of bead work, etc., are worth a great deal of money. We have factories for making antique furniture, and there are factories which make Indian articles for sale at summer and winter resorts—frightful stuff it is, which ought to be barred by law—but of the ancient sporting gear of the native tribes the supply now is very limited. There are but few of the old Indian dresses, made of white sheep leather, and ornamented each with two or three hundred elk teeth. There is a legend that among the Blackfeet a vandal once dug up some of the buried belles of early days for the sake of the elk teeth which still remained on their forgotten finery. He did quite a business in elk teeth in this way.

Here, under glass and well cared for, is an article the use of which must be explained. It is a saddle from the Pawnees, almost a hundred years old,

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decorated with red flannel, now almost vanished through ravages of moth and natural decay, and ornamented with beads such as you cannot buy today. The deer hair in the pads is dust today, and the buffalo hide cinch is hard as steel. You will not find any such saddles today, for the Indians now buy cow saddles as good as you yourself own.

On yonder heavily studded belt—like the one on which sometimes you carry your hunting knife and ax when you are after big game—there is a little packet of hide neatly folded and tied together. What is it, and why is it there on the hunting belt? It has always been there, and often I have been asked by the curious what it was. Once, I think, it was opened on the sly by a curious white man. That was sacrilege—an act wholly wrong. It was promptly punished also; for, although the fault was not my own, I had hard hunting to get my moose, and when I did, he had no horns! Why was that? Obviously, because someone had been monkeying with my “medicine.” The aboriginal gods took their revenge.

The medicine bag was something sacred in the Indian’s lodge. To touch it, or to attempt to unwrap the medicine bundle, was an insult to him and his religion. It was a sacred thing. Each man had his own medicine, and what it was was his

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business and no one's else. So what there is in my own little medicine bundle, without which I would not think of going on a big-game hunt, is my own secret. All I know is that it usually brings home the bacon, and that without it I am lacking in confidence of success. This is not to be called superstition. You ought not to call any man's religion a superstition; nor ought you to make too light of the things he calls his own and which he has found good.

For that matter, you ought not to jest or sneer at any of this plunder which you find stored away sacredly, and sometimes secretly, by scores and hundreds of sportsmen who in public are successful citizens and men of substance, but who in private are no more than pirates, no more than savages, no more than boys.

XIV

WHITHER ARE WE DRIFTING?



XIV

WHITHER ARE WE DRIFTING?

TIME was when any well-ordered country journal—yea, even any self-respecting metropolitan sheet—felt it obligatory now and then to demand of its readers, in piercing editorial tones, “Whither are we drifting?” No doubt a great many of our journals have discovered divers and sundry directions in which we are drifting, although it is not of record that the drifting has appreciably been stopped. We still drift, but somehow, in haphazard and careless fashion, manage to make some sort of port every once in a while.

All nations have at times serious moments of self-search and self-depreciation. It is something like the old spring treatment of sulphur and molasses. If it does not do any particular good, at least it does not do any particular harm.

More than once, when witnessing certain tendencies in modern sport in this or that commercialized form, I have felt impelled to demand in piercing tones, “Whither are we drifting?” So far as can

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be determined, this never did anyone any particular harm, and never did anyone any particular good. That things have continued to drift pretty much the same you may discover by even the most careless perusal of the average sporting page of the daily press, where you will find baseball, racing, prize-fighting, football, this or that current popular or fashionable sport by proxy, furthered and featured *ad libitum* and sometimes, one must confess, *ad nauseam*.

It might be supposed that the average sporting writer of the daily page, who makes his living from his acquaintance with baseball, football, prize-fighting, racing, etc., would be loyal to his own clientage, even to the point of prejudice. You would not expect commonly to find on any sporting page a word adverse to any of the commercialized sports of America. You might opine that the writers of this sort of thing are "lewd fellows of the baser sort," with no special mentality of their own. That is to say, you might think this if you had no special mentality of your own. As a matter of fact, there are some very able men engaged in precisely this form of journalism. Some of them are brilliant men; most of them are philosophers; nearly all of them are keen observers.

Therefore if you found such a man of wide ex-

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perience in his line of work turning, so to speak, upon his own kind, and demanding of them in piercing tones, "Whither are we drifting?" you might be entitled to a feeling of mild surprise—or, had you yourself been engaged in voicing that same earnest question, a feeling of a certain exultation. I may confess surprise and elation when in a recent issue of a leading daily I found a signed article by the sporting editor, who very calmly proceeded to hang on the fence the utter and entire hide of organized sport. In short, although himself concerned in a business way with baseball, football, racing, prize-fighting, he hesitated not to say deliberately that the followers of these sports were of small use to their country, and gave small promise of becoming good examples of American manhood. Brave words!

It should be the ambition of each of us to be remembered by his fellow men after he himself has ceased to be. Such has been my own ambition. Casting about me for some definite means of attaining this post mortem result, I discovered that my own sole title to distinction lay in the fact that never in my life had I seen a game of professional baseball. So far as I am able to discover, I am the only one of something like a hundred million Americans who can lay claim to this solitary station in life. I

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trust to earn my monument, although at times tempted to fall. In this way, in part by preference and in part by resolution, I have built up a vast ignorance regarding certain of those things over which the other hundred million of our citizens annually go mad.

A gentleman of my acquaintance in the metropolis of New York not long ago demanded of me with tears in his voice why Connie McGraw ever allowed Willie Collins to be sold West. I am not sure that it was Connie McGraw, and it may not have been Willie Collins, but Eddie Peterson. I am quite clear, however, that he had been sold West, much to the shame and disgrace of someone, as slaves at one time were sold South. Still, I firmly explained to my friend that I neither knew nor cared why the said Collins, or Peterson, or whoever he was, had been sold West, South, or in any other direction. In short, I had no baseball shrine, nor knew the saints of any.

I never cared to pay good money to see someone else have a good time. I loved baseball—that is, I did love it when I was a boy and played it myself. I decline to pay to see a hired man play it. Were it not for certain damaged fingers on my hands which have ever debarred me from heights in the field of piano or violin—joints acquired in the exultant days

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of youth when I played baseball for myself—I might some day renew my interest in baseball as a sport—but not on any hired man basis.

Strange to say, this was precisely the same conclusion arrived upon by my sporting editor aforesaid, and he reached this conclusion not by reason of any definite ambition to have a monument builded over himself as craving the recollection of his fellow man. No, he simply said what he had to say because he felt it and meant it. In the light of a calm and dispassionate reason he seemed—if we may employ a much mixed metaphor—to be standing in the way of his bread and butter.

The writer above mentioned stated as his calm opinion that the man who pursues athletics is not and never was a fighting patriot. He said that in the Spanish War not a ballplayer went to the front, nor any professional athlete in any other walk of life. With one exception, not a boxer, not a professional man of any sort ever went to that war. Again, he pointed out that in these days when England needs men in her army more than she ever did in all her life, she is not getting many enlistments from the ranks of the professional athletes or from those who pay to see professional athletes perform. At one football game there were one hundred and fifty thousand spectators; they pay a tremendous

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gate in Great Britain to see professional football, much more than we do in this country. Out of that entire assembly one man heard his country's call and enlisted in the ranks. Out of a million football players and football payers, you could count on the fingers of one hand the total enlistments for an entire week at that early time of England's greatest need.

I presume that in this country, baseball is our most highly developed gate-money sport; that it is more fully commercialized than any sport we ever had. The shrewd advertisers of this business—and it is to be called a business and not a sport—have been fully able to hypnotize pretty much of all the citizenry of this country. Some of our wisest and ablest business men and professional men—lawyers, judges, doctors, merchants, and ministers—find enjoyment in watching hired men of no loyalty whatever pit themselves against a like number, of more or less similar salaries and more or less similar purposes in life. If they like it there is no law against it. On the contrary, there is for it the strong law of popular custom. Why, therefore, should our sporting editor above mentioned take a fall out of the attendants at paid games?

He opined that he would find witnessing at a baseball game more men disposed to sit on a cushion

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than those who could march thirty miles a day; more men able to criticize the umpire than are able to take a rifle and find the bull at five hundred yards on a gray day with a five-o'clock wind. He was of the belief that more of the attendants at such games would be able to do accurate practice with the pop bottle or a seat cushion than would be able to lift their own weight a hundred times on the parallel bars. In short, he did not consider the average baseball fan a good specimen of the American citizen. And understand, this was his conclusion, reached independently.

I do not know that it should be the one ambition of a nation to raise soldiers. But I do know that soldiers, a lot of them, good ones, may be needed by this or any other country on mighty short notice. Where did England get them? Where should we be obliged to get them? Where did Germany get them? As to the latter nation, it certainly is true that she did not get them in baseball parks, but out of turner societies and drill barracks. In Munich, in Dresden, and other towns where there were military barracks, I have sometimes seen German recruits being trained by their officers. They were not taught to read the score sheet, or to recognize Mr. Connie McGraw or Mr. Willie Collins on sight, or to smite the umpire in the twenty-four ring

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across a five-o'clock wind by means of a pop bottle. No, those clodlike chaps from the farms were doing stunts on the trapeze, the parallel bars, and the vaulting horse; I looked at them, sometimes an hour at a time, through the cracks in the fence, just as a small boy peeps through the cracks in a baseball park fence.

Now, without argument for any country or against any country—and surely I would rather argue for my own than against it—and without advancing any cheap, ready-made conclusions whatever, let us just take the facts brought back by some of the American correspondents who saw the first line of the German army in its westward march. Those troops had had no special training in marching; they were only a few days afield; they were doing thirty miles a day or better under full equipment, seventy pounds exclusive of rifle and ammunition. They dropped where they stood at night, worn out; but there were no stragglers. Where did these chaps come from? The baseball parks, or the turner clubs and barrack drills? They were not to be measured in the terms of an army, but in the terms of a citizenry.

England's army did not come from the pop bottle and seat cushion brigade. Excellent material was found among men who took sport at first hand, and

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not by proxy, who played their own ball and did not pay to see hired men play it; who rode and walked, or followed a plow afield, or did something else which actually exercised mind and muscle and built actual manhood. The English officer came out of amateur and not commercialized sport—personal sport, not sport by proxy.

In the opinion, let us say, of more than one sporting writer, you cannot make any citizenry better than the individual units of it; and you cannot make a man by his watching a fifty-cent game played by some other man who is a man. In other words, the best kind of sport in the world is that which develops the individual as a sportsman and as a physically and mentally efficient unit. If professional gate-money football does that for the observer, if professional baseball does that for the observer, if professional prize-fighting or horse-racing does that for the observer, then I must say I remain yet to be convinced, and still ask to be shown just how that can happen.

And yet if you will look about you among your own friends in your own town, you will find so many men finding almost their only recreation on the old Roman Coliseum basis. They pay their gate-money to see athletes perform; they are not themselves athletes, not themselves good specimens of

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manhood—or at least not so good as they would be if they would work harder and not pay to see someone else work.

If you want to sell a story or picture, have it objective and not subjective. If you want to succeed in business, be a man of deeds and not of theories. In actual life take the concrete, and not the abstract, as your creed. Therefore, applying these rules to your own case, should it not be plain that in objective baseball, applied baseball, there is much more benefit than there is in the abstract or subjective baseball as practiced by the man who pays a fee for his entrance ticket, and who thereafter leans back and criticizes the players but does not himself play?

Baseball is a splendid game—if you play it yourself. Football is a splendid game—if you play it yourself. I played it for four years in my own college time, and I loved it. So far as it is an amateur competition I love it still. But if football became a professional thing in this country as it is in Great Britain, I should not care for it at all. I should not pay to see it. Neither, I fancy, would my sporting editor above mentioned. We are a minority of two men out of over a hundred million now. Must we remain so solitary, gentle and thinking reader?

My hardy sporting editor is guilty of these

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words: "The worst effect of utter abandonment to sport is the degradation of the intellect which it brings about. The young Englishman who reads nothing but cricket and football scores, and the young American who reads nothing but the baseball and prize-fighting news, are simply of no value. Their minds are destroyed. They become incapable of any thought whatsoever, of any noble impulse, or of any patriotic conception."

That certainly is going pretty strong. Pray note that the remarks are placed in quotation, and that they are quoted direct from the writing of a sporting editor on a sporting page devoted to professional sport.

Take a scene at the old Coliseum of Rome, in the days when Rome was at her best and proudest, when her paid attendance at the games was largest, when her professional men had the most money and the most time to spend in watching someone else furnish a Roman holiday. Look at the observers of the games, and then at the players of the games themselves—the bloody game of human life and death it was sometimes, the test for the survival of the fitter human being. Which side of the Coliseum rail survived—the fighting men in the arena or the men who paid to lean over the rail and criticize them at their work? There are holes in the ground where

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some of those men sat in the Coliseum. There are cathedrals elsewhere built by the descendants of the men who fought in the ring.

The paid idea of sport and the individual idea of sport—which has survived in the world and which is going to survive? And where did the barbarians get the sinews which made them worth paying to see when they played the game of survival? Did they grow strong by paying to see someone else fight? No, they got their strength in war or in work, in sport or in exercise. And when a nation comes to the place where it has to pay to see someone else play the games, that nation is, at least in the humble opinion of a minority of two, on the national toboggan with the way greased for a quick and easy national descent.

If we could reverse the scene in our own arena and leave nine men in the seats to watch fifty thousand citizens play baseball on the ground, then baseball might be of some definite good to us. That would be organized baseball worth while. If the umpire at the football game could put his eleven on the seats and make thirty thousand men go through the motions through which he has forced his team during these weary months of training, then football would be the grandest thing that ever happened for America. If the two hired scrappers who draw

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a big gate, inclusive of many men of supposed intelligence and standing, could go out on the ringside seats and watch five thousand men in gloves do a battle royal, then boxing might be of some use to America. But all these sports are organized on a commercial basis, appealing to certain instincts of the human heart, yet not exercising any of the functions of the human body. And they are coming to stand for sport as we know it on the sporting pages and in the daily life of our country.

Let us say that we have a hundred million people in America who go to see the baseball games—or did go before baseball got into such legal messes as showed its seamy side of commercialism. Out of the hundred million people we may classify some five million as men who also care for the sports of rod and gun, of the field, the stream, the forest. I presume that we could add to that five million outdoor men, another five million of Americans who really care for their bodily welfare to the extent of taking some form of regular physical exercise for the purpose of keeping physically fit. That is to say, we might claim ten per cent of our citizenry—ten million out of, say, a hundred million—as furnishing the best material for the recruiting of an army. Those men, individual sportsmen who follow sport for its individual benefit and for the exer-

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cise of their own bodies—on the Thracian and not the Roman basis—would more easily make soldiers than the average man of the other ninety millions who perhaps take sport by proxy, who do not care for their own bodies to the extent of manly physical sports practiced at first hand.

But the query comes from certain departments at Washington, “Why prepare for war and why talk of soldiers?” Because fitness for the soldier’s game is fitness for any work or business, almost any sport. Sport by proxy does not make a better man out of one; it simply wastes an afternoon for him and leaves him where he was before, plus only a little better knowledge of Connie McGraw or Willie Collins—or whoever those gentlemen may be if rightly named.

Blood tells—but it must be real blood. If the blood of the Roman Coliseum told, if it tells today in the form of descendants, it was the blood of the survivors in the arena which survives today, not of those who paid certain sesterces for box seats on the inside of the rail. If the blood of English nobility tells, it is because that nobility found its sport, not by means of paid gate-money entertainments, but by means of hunting, shooting, riding, angling, swimming—all the sports of the outdoors. Those things build blood of the sort which does tell, and

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which keeps on telling—telling in business, telling in descendants, telling in family in the only way in which family is worth the name.

But paid spectators of sports do not produce that sort of blood for very many generations, not unless they have other forms of sport as well, individual sport, actual sport, sport on the earth, under the sky, by the waters, in the woods—building blood which tells today and tomorrow. If a son of mine contracted the sneaking habit of going fishing whenever he got a chance I am not sure that I would lick him for it. But if he developed a predilection for pop and cigarettes, if he did not know how to walk or shoot or ride, if he came home and told me all about Connie McGraw and Willie Collins and nothing about trees and flowers, methinks I would keep a large paternal slipper in pickle for his anatomy.

All this, however, in strict confidence, gentle reader. Who am I to chide you? I do not chide you. But the long years of the future will chide you if you are not a man.



